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RUSSIA,
POLITICAL AND SOCIAL.

BY
L. TIKHOMIROV.

Translated from the French by
EDWARD AVELING, D.Sc.

VOL. II.



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BOOK VI.

THE INTELLECTUAL MOVEMENT.

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CHAP. I. The “Intelligentia.”—Its birth.—Its growth.—Its leaders persecuted by the Government.—The “Intelligentia” struggles in the name of the people.—Knowledge of its own strength.—Its idealism.—Theoretically, the “Intelligentia” and the revolutionists are one.

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CHAPTER I.

The “Intelliguentia.”—Its birth.—Its growth.—Its leaders persecuted by the Government.—The “Intelliguentia” struggles in the name of the people.—Knowledge of its own strength.—Its idealism.—Theoretically, the “Intelliguentia” and the revolutionists are one.

In studying the social classes of Russia, I have said nothing about the enlightened Russian class, the “intelliguentia.” Yet the part it plays is at once very curious and of capital importance in Russian contemporary history.

First, what is the intelliguentia ?

Is education in Russia the special privilege of any single class ? Have we not educated nobles, merchants, artisans, peasants ? And if education is spread over all classes, what connection can there be between the ideas of an educated noble and those of an educated peasant, between those of a manufacturer and an artisan who are both well read ? Is not each of them impregnated with the ideas of his class, ideas opposed and perhaps hostile to those of other classes ?

This is the very thing that does not hold in Russia. Certainly, among educated people, there have been and are many who represent the ideas of

their class, *i.e.* those of the nobility, the clergy, the *bourgeoisie*, *e.g.* But when all is said and done, these are exceptions, and, what is more, they are as a rule of no ability and of no note. They seem purely accidental. They exercise very little influence on the general march of Russian civilization ; they have neither predecessors nor successors. The mass of enlightened people in Russia, whether nobles or workmen, think quite differently. The general march of Russian civilization and its historic *rôle* are by no means after the heart of Prince Chtcherbatov, who in the time of Catherine II. represented the nobility in this movement, or after that of the representatives of *bourgeois* ideas in our own time, such as Bezobrazov and others. It is a strange thing that the people representative of a class-idea are so insignificant, leave so little trace anywhere, that even to mention a few names of mark and influence is difficult. Especially to name any of influence.

At the present moment, Katkov has great influence on the Government. On politics he has an influence the like of which no writer has exercised in any country at any time. But what influence has he on society and, above all, on the intellectual movement ? Ask the first Russian you meet. He will burst out laughing : " Katkov and intelligence ! What an idea ! They are two things wide as the poles asunder." Yet Katkov publishes two journals and one review. A whole army of his comrades and creatures are writers on other publications, professors in the universities ; hundreds of masters chosen by him fill the gymnasiums. The ministry of public instruction has been, this twenty years or

more, the ministry of Katkov. Finally, to make his ideas take root more firmly, he has founded, under his personal direction, the Lyceum of the Crown Prince Nicolas. Now, if we know of many revolutionists that have come from this Lyceum, we do not know of any descendant of Katkov that is of value, not even a journalist. If you read in the *Moscow Gazette* a good article, you may be sure that it is by Katkov himself.

Russian civilization goes on its way, leaving these people on one side and out of reckoning. They have tried hard to check its current, to make channels that may turn it in this direction or in that; they lessen the purity of the water, the depth of the stream, but they have not the power to change its course. It goes its own way, to its own end, the fulfilling of its own mission, flowing whither the social situation of the country compels.

Russian civilization is still very young; scarcely two hundred years old. Moreover its actual origin is referable to the influence of Europe. Thence it has, so to say, been transplanted to Russia, and as a consequence it was long, and still is, very imitative. But the surroundings in which it was working out had their influence on it, even before the time when the civilized folk, the intelliguentia, understood and explained to their own minds their sympathies, their antipathies, in a word, the tendency of their ideas. Since Russian civilization began, it has been notable for its markedly democratic nature, wholly unintentional, innate, one may say. The intelliguentia grew up side by side with the development of serfdom, at the time of the most

complete enslavement of the people, at the time of the rapid growth of the nobility. And, moreover, it seems to have no understanding of the public welfare in any other sense than the interests of the masses of the people. It is impregnated with a profound sentiment of equality. This feeling of democracy will influence all such development as may result from the thought of the intelliguentia.

The history of Russia has certainly not solved the question of the organization of the State, of the rights and duties of the different classes, in the sense of the interests of the people.

"Why is this?" asks the enlightened class. "Is it just?"

"No," is the reply.

And so soon as it finds itself face to face with an order of things opposed to justice, it condemns them.

Prince Kantemire, the first of our poets of ability in point of time, in 1738, writes in his satires:—

"Adam begat no nobles."

Or,

"Noah saved alone within his ark
Men that were his equals,
Mere labourers, whose only fame
Was in their good behaviour."

Another eminent writer of the time of Catherine II.¹ delivered by the mouth of the hero of his tragedy, "Vadime," severe philippics against tyranny.

"Our autocrats, the source of all our ills,
Destroy the purest of all virtues pure.
They make a tyrant of our lord, the tzar."

¹ Kniajnine.

The most celebrated writers of this time, Novikov and Krylov, who soon acquired a universal reputation by their fables, attacked strongly the abuses of serfdom, railed at the pretensions of the nobles, and showed that all men are equal. Radichtchev, author of the well-known "Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow," cries out in the midst of fierce curses against serfdom:—

"Oh, Liberty,
Turn into light the dark of slavery.
Let Roman Brutus and Swiss Tell awake !
That on their very throne our Russian tzars
May feel them troubled at thy thunder-voice."

This is the kind of ideas with which the Russian intelliguentia has come into being.

But was it not the tzars that brought civilization to Russia? Were not the nobility the first class among whom it took origin? How then is it that the intelliguentia has so rapidly placed itself in opposition to the tzars, and the nobility of whom it was itself a part?

I must remind the reader that the nobility, to whom at the outset the greater part of the intelliguentia belonged, were made up for the most part of parvenus, who had and could have no idea of class. One of the earliest Russian writers, Possochkov, was a peasant. The first Russian man of science, a man of vast capacity, rival of Franklin in the discovery of the laws of electricity, and at the same time the real founder of our literary language of to-day, Lomonossov, was a simple Archangelsk fisherman, who left his cottage to seek in far off Moscow the teaching of science. A poet of our

time, seeing a poor little village lad going to school, encourages him thus :—

“ Soon shall you learn at school
How once a peasant of Archangelsk,
By his will and by God’s,
Became a learned man and noble.”¹

These lines the child learnt at school, and thus the idea of human equality sank yet more deeply into his soul.

As to the tzars, their civilizing mission is pure invention. One only of our tzars was actually a worker for civilization on a large scale—Peter I. This strange man, brought up in the streets, far away from the court that attempted his life, this tzar who abolished the hereditary nature of the monarchy,² who tried to place the law above himself and his own will, passed through all the military grades he had founded, beginning with the lowest. The successors of Peter I. had nothing of his ability. Certainly they employed educated people, officials, military men, mechanicians; they loved art and literature, as an ornament of their court; but the protection they gave the intellectual movement went no further than this. As soon as civilization emerged from its servile and obedient condition, they began to persecute it. Anything other than this was impossible. Russian civilization involuntarily places in the foreground the good of the

¹ Niekrassov.

² The law of Peter I. gave the tzar the right to nominate his own successor. This law was only repealed by Paul I., who made the law that holds to-day as to the hereditary nature of the throne.

people. Hence it is in revolt against the classes that the monarchy tried to create, and against the monarchy itself, as betrayer of the interests of the mass of the people. Further, education developed the personality of the individual, and as a consequence strengthened in him the sentiment of dignity, his aspirations after liberty, and this to an extent far greater than an absolute monarchy based on serfdom could allow. Quite naturally the monarchy tried to destroy these subversive ideas to which education gave impetus and scope.

Persecutions began. To enumerate these is literally impossible. To speak only of the authors already quoted, Kniajnine was dead before his tragedy was denounced by the censorship, but his family was persecuted ; Novikov, as well as a large number of his comrades, had to undergo a long detention in the fortress of Peter and Paul, and saw all his civilizing plans ruined by the Government ; Radichtchev was condemned to death, and mercy alone commuted this sentence into deportation to Siberia.

That is how Catherine II. behaved when she was face to face with civilization. In the time of Paul I. all attempts in the same direction were persecuted literally with fury. Alexander I., who plumed himself on his liberalism, yet organized the censorship ; the second half of his reign was the time of the reaction at its worst. Since the time of Nicolas I., the Government has been openly hostile to civilization ; to the intellectual movement this hostility has shown no truce.

Not to enter into lengthy historical details, it is

enough to say that to-day it is difficult to find among the illustrious champions of the intelliguentia a man who has not in the course of his life endured Government persecutions, who has not been regarded as "of evil intent," who has not been under police surveillance, and so forth. Dostoïevsky was a veritable martyr. He was condemned to death; then he was reprieved, and sent to the galleys. The celebrated romance writer described later on in his "House of the Dead" the terrible life in the midst of a world of crime, under the authority without limit of chiefs whom none controls, and who are worse than the convicts themselves. But the actual life was worse even than the romance. At the galleys, Dostoïevsky was beaten with rods because he refused to denounce his comrades. This barbarous torture shattered the nerves of the unhappy artist. After it, he had an attack of epilepsy, a malady from which he suffered to the end of his days.

Another writer, yet more celebrated, Alexander Hertzen, was accused of "political crimes." He was imprisoned for many years; then he emigrated, and all his goods were confiscated.

Tchernychevsky, after long years of the galleys, passed many more in an out-of-the-way fort in Siberia, under the strict surveillance of the gendarmes, his only society. Only recently, after twenty years of this martyrdom, prematurely old from suffering, he has been transferred to a less severe place of exile, at Astrakan.

Chtchédrine (Saltykov) was interned [confined to a particular district] by administrative decree.

Tourguéniev also was for many years banished to his own estate, and all his life long was a suspect.

Niekrrassov, when dying, saw the police rummaging in every corner of his lodging.

A perquisition [house-search] has just recently been carried out at Léon Tolstoi's.

These examples might be multiplied to infinity. People like Ivan Aksakov, who is now publishing a reactionary Slavophile journal, have had to undergo banishment by administrative decree. It is, I think, superfluous to speak of the unmitigated despotism with which the Government constantly interferes in the private life of people that belong to the intelliguentia. It literally makes no exception in their favour.

Thus, *e.g.*, when the first Slavophiles—some of them very rich and of illustrious family (Khomia-khov, the Kireïevskys, Alsakovs, Kochalevs), under the influence of their national leanings, had a fancy for wearing the Russian dress and letting their beards grow, the Governor-General of Moscow ordered them, through the police, to shave their beards and to put on again the European costume.

All these persecutions, sometimes petty teasings, sometimes terrible, could not but raise the spirit of opposition in the civilized class, although this spirit assumedly existed before the persecutions set in. Had the ideas of the intelliguentia been “sound, reasonable, accurate,” in the eyes of the Government, no persecution would have occurred. They could not be other than they were. Ignorance, unconsciousness, had engendered the order of things that reigned in Russia at the dawn of this move-

ment. Thought, developing, passing into consciousness, must infallibly work out the destruction of this social system, and this the more as Russia was influenced morally by Europe at the very time when it was rushing into its great revolutionary cataclysm. As soon as he knew how to read, the Russian was given up to the teaching of Voltaire and Rousseau. In their school he learnt the doctrines that supplied the inspirations of his instinct, and strengthened these with scientific authority.

This was the manner of development of the intelliguentia; and it is precisely this democratic idea, this idea of antagonism, that gives to Russian civilization its originality. The history of that civilization is the history of this idea. To the educated class, imbued with this idea, belong almost all the great men of the country, all the talents, almost everything that leaves after itself a tradition, all that makes proselytes. Scattered through all classes, the intelliguentia seems to form a special class, linked together by a spiritual and moral unity, that of its historic mission. In all classes, the intelliguentia plays the part of a kind of ferment that gives birth, wherever it comes, to the critical spirit, to aspirations after knowledge, after justice. Everywhere its work is purely revolutionary. Everywhere it is gnawing at the edifice of authority, of class, of the prestige of power. Everywhere it places in the van the rights of the people and of the individual. By degrees, the mere idea of knowledge becomes in Russia almost wholly blended with that of something subversive. And, as a matter of fact, throughout the nineteenth century, all the plots, all the attempts at

political disturbance in Russia are due to the initiative of the intelliguentia, and that not in the interests of a class but of the whole people. This is the cause not infrequently of an apparent contradiction in the agitations set on foot by the upper classes—a contradiction that Count Rostoptchine formulated with as much acuteness as injustice when the Decembrist outbreak took place. “I can understand,” said the count, “the French *bourgeois* bringing about the Revolution to get his rights, but how am I to understand the Russian noble making a revolution to lose them?” The count’s mistake and the key to the enigma are in this—that the noble who aimed at this revolution was not the noble that had remained true to his class, but the noble who had gone over to the ranks of the intelliguentia.

In fine, the educated class, with its democratic tendencies and its spirit of opposition, is in some sort a group of representatives of the people face to face with the Government and the upper classes. A strange situation, and largely one of profound tragedy. Those of the intelliguentia who, like Count Léon Tolstoï, belong to the highest of the aristocracy, have a strange, almost fleshly love for the true working people.¹ After the fashion of Nicolas Milioutine, they pledge themselves to destroy serfdom, because they themselves have unwittingly made ill use of it. Tourguéniev, gentleman by position, wealthy landed proprietor, whose mother was ferocity itself to her serfs, took the oath of Hannibal to destroy serfdom. Hertzen, heir to a

¹ “Confession,” p. 45.

rich patrimony stocked with serfs, declares proudly he will never traffic in human beings. The thing they hold most sacred is the good of the people, the liberty of the people; their pride is in serving this cause. For it they become the foes of their fathers, their brothers, their nearest relatives; they act against their own interests. This little knot of men beholds the forces of the Government arrayed against them. What matter? They have only the consciousness of their historic mission. The people is nothing to them. The people knows them not, and they know but little of it. It is true that the intelliguentia has made gigantic efforts to know the people, to get at its heart. The study of the people, of its costumes, its songs, its legends, its needs, has this long time past been the lodestone to the best of the forces of the intelliguentia. Later on, when this class understood more clearly the political task before it, with the same energy it strove after a union with the people. These struggles must last for years before the people will begin to understand the intelliguentia, and to act to some extent in concert with it. For years it has struggled in the name of the people, knowing to the full that the people were not even aware of its existence; could in no wise distinguish between it and the first comer of those that live upon the people; would not lift a finger to defend or to maintain it. From the outset the enemies of the intelliguentia cried out at it: "You are without support—an abnormal fact in Russia—an importation from no one knows where." If he refused to admit the justice of this, the educated man none the

less felt in his heart, that for long, long years to come his would be the martyr's part. He said to himself :—

“ Perhaps—what man may tell ?—my blood shall be
As drops of molten lead, that, falling, wake
The people's conscience from its long, deep sleep ;
Then, face to face with me, their own pale ghost,
At last that people's conscience understand
What horrors they allow, and yet are dumb.”¹

Many died with this alone as their consolation.

Nevertheless, even in such straits as these, these people never wavered in their unbounded faith in that historic mission, whose end is the complete transformation of Russia ; they were never doubtful of their strength to carry it out. At times, after specially severe checks, they were something discouraged, disenchanted, as after December 14th, 1825, at the end of the reign of Nicolas I., and in the years following the emancipation of the peasants and inaugurating the period of reaction of the reign of Alexander II. But these moments of discouragement pass very quickly, and give place again to a fanatical faith in the mission laid upon these men. In its intensity this faith recalls that of the early Christians, who, even in the midst of the flames that consumed them and almost all those that thought with them, never doubted the triumph of Divine grace. Alexander Hertzen, depicting the sad decadence of Russia in his youth, wrote : “ The moral level of society was lowered, its development interrupted—everything of progress, of energy, smitten out of life. The vast peasant world was silent

¹ Tcherny : “ From Behind the Bars.”

and indifferent." A terrible state of things, is it not? But do not imagine that Russia is doomed. "The Russia of the future," Hertzen goes on, "was a few young men, scarcely more than children, so insignificant, so little noted, that they might with ease be held between the sole of the foot of the autocracy and the ground. In them was the heritage of the 14th of December, the heritage of universal science and of a Russia wholly belonging to the people."¹

Mikhel Mikhaïlov, one of the most remarkable poets, in 1861, just when they were sending him to the galleys,² replied to the address of condolence of the students :—

"Even within the shadow of my cell
I shall preserve most holy in my heart,
My firm belief and sovran in the young."

The most fervent faith of this man, who sealed his creed with his life, was in that rising generation that bore in its bosom the principle of civilization.

Yet more characteristic is the propaganda of Dmitri Pissarev. This young writer, of great capacity, had for some time immense influence in Russia. During his long incarceration in the fortress of Peter and Paul, he wrote from out that prison articles for the Review, *The Word of Russia*, that for many years made him the oracle of our educated youth. What was his teaching to Russia? Ceasingly he pointed out the faults of Russian life. In Russia, almost everything is bad, since everything

¹ "The Pole Star," v. and vii.

² He died there soon, on account, they say, of a shock to the system due to the corporal punishment inflicted on him.

needs modification, and, outside the intelliguentia, there is no living force capable of doing anything. The intelliguentia must do all. It will transform morals, found civilization, reform institutions, develop the productive forces of the country. Russia is, in the eyes of Pisarev, a kind of inert mass, a lifeless body, the whole of the strength of which is in its soul, the intelliguentia. It is true that Russia has not another laudator of the cultured class as loud in his praises as Pisarev, and that his contempt for the people soon overturned the throne of this oracle. Yet, for some years, thousands admired him, looked up to him as their master, and naturally found in his ideas something in harmony with their own. We find this same boundless confidence in their own strength later on among the Russian revolutionists. Frequently they propose plans that at first sight seem impossible. That is because the consciousness of their own strength is strong in the soul of the man of the intelliguentia; it makes all idea of the impossible only a question of degree to him. In this connection the vivid remembrance of one of the dearest comrades of my youth comes to my mind.

During his long confinement, D. was in constant rebellion, asking from the authorities the most illegal privileges, permission, *e.g.*, for the prisoners under solitary confinement to talk and walk together. "We must protest," he kept on saying. "But what can you do?" asked his more reasonable comrades. "Remember, you are under lock and key, hemmed in with bars, guarded by soldiers. Where are you going to find the force, without which you cannot

make the authorities attend to you? "The force? In me, in you! I am the force." "My dear fellow, that force is no good. It will be broken in a minute." "It will be broken? Very well. Let them break it! Let them try to break it."

In 1878, I became acquainted with many terrorists, as they were then called. Then I was not acquainted with this type, and I asked out of curiosity, one of them, Ivitchévitch, as to their plans. "It is open to doubt," I ventured to say, "whether a sufficient power can be got together to upset the Government. Too great a conspiracy would be needed for that." "The Government," he answered, "may be forced to make concessions, even if we are not strong enough to overturn it." "What then is your plan?" "We shall punish it for each of its crimes. We shall terrorize it and force it to respect the rights of man." "But do you really hope to frighten the Government? Do you forget it has at its disposal, police, army, vast means of defence? It will hang, whip, exterminate you more rapidly than you will its servants." "We shall see."

He was a strong, sterling, joyous fellow of unbounded courage. In war he would have performed prodigies. A year later, he was mortally wounded in a desperate struggle with the gendarmes.¹

What is the meaning of this boundless belief in

¹ I may here remark, that the idea of terrorizing the Government was in existence before the party of the Will of the People was formed in 1879. The plan of this organization is quite different. It lays before itself as aim, the overturning of the Government by one grand conspiracy. Those unfamiliar with the question generally mix up the two movements, and incorrectly call the members of the Will of the People party, terrorists.

their own strength? Is it not a sign of madness, as our reactionaries say? No; in actual life, at all events in Russian life, it is often proved to the astonishment of all, that the solitary man, immured in a dungeon, is in fact a force. In the Russian prisons, the political prisoners, constantly liable to be thrown into cells and to be beaten, perishing from aneurism or phthisis, are at times successful in wearing out the authorities by this incessant struggle, making them doubt the success of what they are doing, making them let their prisoners do all they wish. What happens in the prisons happens also sometimes in politics. He that knows Russia, he that knows the extent to which the life of the intelliguentia manifests itself in the national life, cannot fail to see that this confidence of the cultured class in itself is the result of its historic experience. The importance of the part played in our history by the man of the intelliguentia was often immense, and quite justifies Niekrassov's words :

“ Who doubts the men of prehistoric time,
Since in our own days heroes twain or three
Bear shoulder-high the burden of their time ? ”

This belief has taken firm root in the mind of the cultured class. Heroic as some of its members are, it is assuredly not merely the abilities of these that have given rise to this confidence of the intelliguentia in its own strength. It is the more or less clear understanding of this historic fact, that the intelliguentia, even if not understood of the people, is the instrument of the organic laws of growth of the whole country—it is this consciousness that assures the persistence of its vitality.

This mode of growth of necessity has two sides : the development of the individual, the development of the forces of the people. Both lead logically to the ruin of the monarchy and of the upper classes at present in existence. This is the line along which the country's development is moving. Thus it is that it finds its reflex in the thought of the cultured class and produces there two chief currents that are always noticeable in that cultured thought.

These two currents, as a rule, are without any clear line of demarcation between them, and scarcely ever come into conflict ; but each of them gives its own hue to the different fractions of the intelliguentia. We have already noticed Dmitri Pisarev, the representative of the more accentuated of the two—of that which aims at the development of the individual, has above all confidence in the individual, and, as a consequence, in that which is his chief strength, science and moral improvement. The same tendency was seen in other forms later on—in what were called the socialist propagandists. It is seen also in the majority of our liberals. The other tendency is seen in the Slavophiles, in many of our most noted writers, such as Dobrolioubov, in a considerable fraction of the revolutionary party, *e.g.*, in our democrats (*narodniks*). These lay the main stress on the development of the masses of the people, on trust in the strength of this development. These two main currents generally blend in different proportions in our intelliguentia ; sometimes they combine in one harmonious whole in the men of genius, in our intellectual movement. This was the case, *e.g.*, with Alexander Hertzen. Besides this, in every case the development of the

different fractions of our cultured class depends on the different stages in the march of the development of Russia. Hence the strength and the indestructibility of the intelliguentia, and also the confidence it has in its own forces. Hence in like fashion, perhaps, its idealism in part.

This is a characteristic on which it is impossible not to lay emphasis. So constantly does our cultured class show such an idealism, such a tendency towards the absolute ideal of right and justice, that it is in open conflict with reality. This idealism gives our intelliguentia an almost religious fervour. It has probably for its foundation the more or less confused consciousness that this movement is developing conjointly with the development of the country itself, on a plan of sufficient grandeur to give rise to the idea of a something absolute that causes men to be wholly swallowed up of their ideal.

This idealism is moreover a consequence of the insufficiency and weakness of the actual *régime*.

This inspires neither respect nor fear ; it gives the impression of an abortive attempt, good for nothing, and that by consequence ought not to be modified, but re-made from top to bottom. The European is in this respect much more circumspect, much more reasonable, much less free. He cannot get away from the influence of facts as they are. In Russia, on the contrary, but little attention is paid to facts as they are. This results, without doubt, from the fact that the historic reality itself is not very lasting, and contains within itself many circumstances that are, in a sense, accidental. Russian State institutions and laws spring up under the influence of a too small

portion of the population. Thus they are for the most part without the sanction of public opinion. Very often, indeed, they are framed in direct contradiction to the needs, the instincts, the desires of the majority. That is why the laws and institutions are far from having a prestige that can restrain the bold flight of human thought. The individual man, having no respect for institutions, having nothing of fear in face of them, feels naturally more independent, more apt for realizing all he would. He cannot understand why it is that he ought to submit to history, and not history to him. Thereupon, for the intelligent and cultured man, his own logic, his own moral sentiment become his motive principles for the good and for the true. Tradition, power, may play their part through the pencil of the censor, by the axe, by the bayonet; they cannot chain the inner soul, and that pushes to the extremest logical deductions both its negations and its ideal aspirations.

On account of this independence of volition, the man of our intelliguentia always seeks for a moral basis for his political and social philosophy. Nowhere are moral questions so much the vogue as in Russia. All things that concern the part played by the individual in history, free will, the responsibility of criminals, the nature of morals, etc., are with us questions as burning as political and economic ones are. They are much more burning questions —they are those that excite the most passion, the most discussion, enthusiasm, hate.

It is a very remarkable thing that our intelliguentia, apparently completely separated from the mass of

the people, yet is so extremely like it in this. Our illiterate peasant, who believes that the earth rests upon three whales, is a great philosopher on moral questions. His tales, his ballads, his songs analyse these questions in such detail, with such poesy, sometimes with such penetration, that it is evident he puts his whole soul into them. Our sects in their manner of considering moral questions approximate yet more closely to our cultured class. "Search for the truth, search for the true faith," is so natural an idea in the eyes of our people that our socialists sometimes make use of it. A man who does not travel, who is altogether a stranger to the country, is a wonder in a village. Rogatchev¹ told me this. "What is your business?" the peasant asks this intruder. "Why have you come here?" "I am in search of the true faith," answered Rogatchev, and that was enough. It may be that in the neighbourhood some sect is hidden, with which the new comer might wish to enter into relation, or perhaps he has come merely to consult a holy man. Further, "faith" does not always mean to the sectaries "religion." It is really an idea large enough to explain to us the universe and man's place in it, his sentiments, his tendencies and the questions of right and wrong he asks himself. The favourite phrase of the intelligentia, obchtchée mirossozertsané (general philosophy) has the same meaning. The cultured man never makes a step without this "general philosophy." It is not enough for him to have a political programme, a social theory; he must find in this programme and this theory a place

¹ One of our best-known propagandists.

for *him*, his personality, his sentiments, his conscience. He must understand how his personality is linked on to things generally, to society, to the universe. These are the questions that in Russia are called social questions.

An idea that is certainly by no means a positivist one, although the Russians love to call themselves positivists, realists, materialists. The Russians are, it seems to me, still too young, too full of a deep-rooted historical force to be able to be positivists. Involuntarily, they make a religion of every theory that appears to be really positive. Hence their movement of civilization is actually capable of producing on society the deep, far-reaching effects of religious movements. It penetrates the whole of social life, modifies the most inner relations of the individual, as *e.g.*, those of man with woman, of parents with children, comrade with comrade, and thus fashions for social reform an infinitely wide basis, built up of these small and apparently purely personal relations.

What then are the moral ideas of the intelliguentia? Has it found them, or is it still in search of them? It seems to me that as a rule all that is wanting is a definite formulation of ideas. The feeling of them, vague and confused, has been present this long while. In any case, these ideas are very clearly defined, as far as the intelliguentia is concerned. It bases its morality on the most complete development of the individual; it assumes that the more the individual is developed, the wider is the scope of his interests. Now the widest in scope of all interests is the social. Hence, as the individual grows, he becomes more and more one with the

interests of society, as if these were his own. Thus the individual comes into the possession of the true morality. This is not the vulgar legal morality, that is made of forms and restrictions, and is held in utter contempt by the man of the intelligentia. Russian artists know how to find the "divine spark" even in criminals apparently the most hardened; they search it out with an unwearied solicitude. In Dostoevsky's novel, *e.g.*, Svidrigaïlov is at once a murderer and a man utterly depraved. Yet as he is about to shoot himself, you feel pity for him rather than contempt, and ask yourself involuntarily, why this moral strength of his has not been employed for good. On the other hand, in Russian books, he that obeys the conventional morality is always the type of complete triviality. In him the artist can find nothing good, nothing but what excites disgust. I remember a character of George Sand who constantly repeats, "Nothing illegal—that is my principle." This person takes part in the abduction of a child from its mother; but at times he inspires sympathy. Such a type is impossible to a Russian writer. If even this character had carried off the child from interest or from hate, if he had not troubled himself about legal or illegal when he was risking the galleys, the Russian writer would have forgiven him, discovered something of human about him, believed in his possible repentance. But—"nothing illegal" as a principle! That formula alone would prove at once to an artist that from the Russian point of view he had before him a man profoundly corrupt. It is easy enough to understand; morality is in the inner tendency to good,

altogether irrespective of what the law demands or does not demand. If a man looks into the law for moral rules, that means that he himself has no morality ; in other words, he is not even a man, is only in outward seeming a human being.

These then are the ideas of thoughtful Russians.

Morality is an inner tendency to good, a desire to be useful, a longing to see those around one happy. This is the idea of the intelliguentia, an idea common to people of opinions quite opposed to one another. In this morality, the intelliguentia tries to find the method of harmonizing the exigencies of the public welfare with unlimited individual freedom. The ideal morality is the "immediate state," as we call it, *i.e.*, a given moral condition in which the individual does good without even noticing it, without an effort on his part. This way of looking at things, whether it wears the black coat of Bentham's utilitarianism or the strait jacket of Dostoëvsky, seems the fundamental, universal base of the philosophy of the cultured classes. Clearly, this idea can unite questions of politics and of morals in an indivisible unity. It brings politics into the region of morals and makes morality a sort of controller of political activity.

I am perforce obliged, so large is the subject of this book, to confine myself to the broad outlines of this characteristic, without entering into the detailed examination of the modifications the intelliguentia tendencies undergo in the various subdivisions.

I have already stated that the educated class has not an entirely homogeneous tendency. To that cause of divergences, with which I have just been

dealing, must be further added the influence of class ideas, which in certain directions mar the purity of the general civilization-idea. Thus, *e.g.*, we have those who are mild partisans of the nobility, like the celebrated poet Pouchkine, or like certain writers of the Slavophile party, such as Kochelev or Prince Vassiltchikov. In the same way a religious bias sometimes is seen in the intelliguentia, as with Dostoïevsky or even Count Léon Tolstoï; and this whilst the intelliguentia is as a whole irreligious, free-thinking.

With great force also European ideas are making their way in Russia; those of France, of Germany, of England. Thus in Russia one may meet Anglo-maniacs, partisans of the aristocratico-liberal constitution of England, and Anarchists, although the actual condition of things in the country does not furnish a favourable basis for the development of either of these parties. All these causes of divergence produce results the more marked as the intelligent Russian is always a dogged theorist, who follows out any idea he has taken up to its most extreme logical conclusions.

Yet the general principle of the civilization-idea is clearly to be seen athwart all this diversity. Dostoïevsky, *e.g.*, was by his political connections reactionary and clerical, if these words can be applied to Russian things. Yet he was unorthodox; he became a kind of fanatical sectary, who, perhaps unconsciously, produced a greater revolution in ideas than many another who would have considered himself revolutionary. Dostoïevsky goes down into the depths of the bagnios, the brothels, the most

terrible abysses of vice and misery. He seeks out human equality where it is most difficult to imagine it as existing ; he shows how relative are the conventional notions of the moral and the immoral, and places before us with a terrible clearness the fatal question of the responsibility for crime and for virtue. And what warmth of compassion for all that is oppressed and humbled ; what faith in the man of the people, who, appearing nowhere, is yet everywhere in his novels the steadfast basis of society ! Dostoïevsky was the political foe of socialist and revolutionary theories, not, I think, because these tend towards the rule of the masses and the enfranchisement of the individual, but because, according to him, they are incapable of bringing about this very enfranchisement. He preached his nebulous and mystic Christianity as the only doctrine that could inaugurate the reign on earth of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Count Léon Tolstoï also calls himself a Christian. He declares against the revolution in his famous thesis upon non-resistance to evil. But his Christianity is only nominal. He is in open opposition to the Church, and all his teaching leads to the conclusion that man can only be happy and live in conformity with his nature, if he lives not for himself alone, lives no mere personal life, but that of humanity as a whole. As to non-resistance to evil, this thesis of Tolstoï is so illogical, so little in harmony with the rest of his teaching, that it is permissible to think this is only a device of the new master, as it was of the early Christians. These also did not openly resist until they had strength enough to win. It is said, how-

ever, that Count Tolstoi himself is not strong enough to be consistent with his own proposition. One day, he was energetically proving that one ought not to use force, not even to protect another against violence. "And if a woman was being violated under your very eyes, what would you do?" some one asked. The Count was disconcerted, and admitted reluctantly that in such a case it would be allowable to oppose force to violence. Of Tolstoi's democratic spirit, of his firm belief that among the working people only can the true man be found, it is superfluous even to speak. He has more than once himself written most clearly on this subject.

Among many of the writers and men of action in Russia, these purely revolutionary principles are admitted as the foundation of their general philosophy by people who do not look upon themselves, and whom no one would regard, as belonging to the revolutionary camp ; by people who are sometimes in the ranks of its adversaries.

One of our writers, Lieskov, who is not without ability, and who has devoted a great part of his literary life to the writing of libels against the revolutionists, is of this number. Katkov receives him with open arms, for he is, beyond dispute, the most gifted of the reactionary writers. Strange, that if you read carefully the attacks, violent to awkwardness and sometimes made up of bare-faced lies, of Lieskov,—he wrote under the pseudonym of Stebnitsky,—you see in them, as it were, the anger of a vexed co-religionist, who is thus violent and unjust only because he does not find in the revolutionary movement the moral elevation he wanted to

see in it. Later on, Lieskov gave up writing political novels. In his romances, that often bear the impress of a strange mysticism, you feel at times a striking kinship with the democrats; the same profound contempt for all high society, the same profound sympathy with the people, and also the same huge and unreasonable expectations of the individual.

Further, it is well to state in this connection, that recently Lieskov, though he is an *employé* of the Government, has been forbidden to write.

In short, the civilizing movement, with the exception of one or two dissentients, has but one idea—the enfranchisement of the masses, the enfranchise-
ment of the individual; an idea that is in Russia of necessity revolutionary, seeing that it saps the very foundation of the present *régime*, established as this is on the basis of the submission of the masses and the thorough oppression of the individual. The ideas of the intelliguentia, further, are held most firmly and clearly by that part of this class which calls itself openly revolutionary.¹ It is here that these ideas attain their full logical development. It is here, above all, that they are transformed into action and give rise to political parties.

In the currents of thought of the intelliguentia, who do not knowingly wish to be revolutionary, the general good work of freedom yet goes on. De-
nounced as they are times and again by our reactionaries, this fact is beyond a doubt.

¹ I use the word "revolutionary," and not "nihilist." The reader will find the reason for this in Appendix B.

CHAPTER II.

The woman question.—Why it presents itself.—Men's ideas ; women's ideas.—Errors in application.—The real application.—The women of the “Intelliguentia.”—The family of the “Intelliguentia.”

If we made any pretence of examining the various consequences that the intellectual movement in Russia has produced during the last two centuries, we should have to devote to this subject a whole monograph ; for it is questionable whether a single trait in the national life could be found that this movement has not more or less influenced. This influence is the more various, as here we have not to do with a limited political movement, but with a civilization-movement of the very largest nature. It is the more far-reaching as, from the inherent properties of our intelliguentia, the latter is frightened by no obstacle, bows to no accomplished fact because it is an accomplished fact ; and, like the tide, ceaselessly gnaws away on all sides at once, until it falls, piece by piece, everything that is of savagery, of ignorance.

In this work I cannot analyse in detail the immense work already done by the intelliguentia, and I shall but pause for a little while on one phase

only of this—the one that draws involuntarily the attention of every observer—the one that no writer can pass over who treats of Nihilism. The reader, without doubt, will divine that I am speaking of the position of women in Russia, of the Russian family. A question full of interest, of moment, in truth; for in the family, that minute cell of the social organism, the social work of the nation is reflected more clearly than in its political institutions.

The position of the woman in the upper classes of Russian society, two hundred years ago, was almost worse than that of woman in the peasant family. Living isolated, after Tartar fashion, she was a complete slave. The husband's horsewhip, with which he brought up his wife, always hung over the bed of the married pair. There was for the woman no society. When Peter I. decreed that men and women should meet in the assemblies, it was looked upon as one of the strangest innovations. To carry out his orders, Peter I. was forced to issue a decree that made these meetings compulsory, and explained in detail how the master of the house was to behave to his guests, and they to him. Women neither knew what to do nor what to say.

Now, the mutual relations between husband and wife in the cultured class are full of a liberty and equality far greater than in any other European nation. This violent change, effected in a time relatively very short, is due in the first place to the influence of the intellectual movement. The man educates the woman; then in turn, he has to reckon with her effect on the family and on himself. Henceforth the old order of things is not possible.

This reciprocal action of man on woman, woman on man, in more or less marked degree, may be looked upon as of very recent origin. But even now it is far from having reached its final stage ; it is going on under men's eyes.

At first the intellectual movement had especially men to work upon. Man was labouring at the bettering of himself. In the literature of the reign of Nicolas I. even, we find a vivid portrayal of the carrying of the intellectual movement into the feminine camp. There can be no doubt as to the causes of this. As soon as he was actively working out his own salvation, man saw that his former treatment of woman was henceforth impossible. The intelliguentia, with its customary idealism, idealized love. In this it sought after a union of men and women so harmonious, a feeling of such depth, as mere physical passion could not give. But where was the woman to be found who could give birth to the kind of love that was a necessity to such a man ?

“ To love—but whom ? ” asks Lermontov in anguish. “ In love there must be equality in physical and in moral feeling.” Lermontov’s paradox, written in the album of a maiden with whom he was for some time in love,¹ had a deep meaning for people at that time. “ Love ! What is it ? ” asked the poet. “ To love more than one is loved—disgust ; to love less than one is loved—misery. What a choice ! ” The girl’s answer shows that woman was beginning to have a will of her own. “ Mon Dieu,” said she, “ one must love just so much as one

¹ “ Souvenirs of Madame Khvostova.”

is loved." But for this to be realized, the equality of the two lovers is indispensable, and for a long, a very long while, this equality was not possible. The man is troubled, bemoans himself, curses the woman, like Tchatsky ("Too much intellect means misery")¹—he avenges himself on her, like Petchorine (*A Hero of our Day*); willy-nilly, he exacts vengeance because she is his inferior, because she can only offer him her sincere affection, her fidelity, her self-abnegation. This is not enough for him. He does not want a slave, the devotion of a dog, he cries out angrily. He wants the love of a human being to whom he also can cling with the same strength, the same unrestraint, not as master or possessor, but as equal to equal, giving life for life, soul for soul, liberty for liberty. Hence arise multitudinous conflicts, poisoning his life and placing her in this dilemma: either she must rise to his level, or else fall even lower than the slave of the ancient family—become a mistress for the time being, with whom a man allies himself whilst he despises her, and whom he leaves without a single memory.

It is difficult for the intelliguentia of the present day to understand all the tragedy of this position, that seems to it now only ridiculous. In the lower grades of society, however, it can still be seen on a large scale. Among the artisans of the towns, *e.g.*, influenced by the same intellectual movement, bitter complaints are constantly heard as to the impossibility of finding among the women of their own class, a companion able to understand the aspirations of the worker. In one of his latest novels, Ouspensky

¹ In *Griboëdov*.

treats this very subject with his usual ability. A provincial assistant surgeon, who cannot even use literary language correctly, but who is under the influence of the movement, tells of his want of success with the women. "Sometimes," says he, "one wants some sort of shelter; you're freezing, freezing in the winter; the desire takes you in your leisure time to warm yourself and exchange a few words with some one. Well—would you believe it—you can't." What does he want exactly? The assistant surgeon sees himself assailed on all hands by women. They hang on his neck. But are these women? "No development at all," cries the angered assistant surgeon; "and in their heads insanity, pure and simple." He is the victim of lofty aspirations, and cannot live by bread alone. "Although," he goes on, "I am only an assistant surgeon, only a mere piece of machinery, I serve society in other ways than by mere words or deeds. . . . If, *e.g.*, a peasant comes looking for me, and some koulak or other sends his carriage for me, I should go to the peasant, and the koulak will have to wait." He even manages to help the peasants out of his poor means. "You come," says he, "to some patient's house. No candle, no bread, no wood, nothing to boil the water with. . . . Will you give them something? What else can you do?" That is the sort of man our assistant surgeon is. But the women? A young widow pleases him. It seems to him as if she understood him. Unfortunately, the poor thing reveals to him in an outburst of tenderness, that far from thinking of burdening him in his services to society, she is quite ready to

get rid of the three children of her departed husband that she may give herself up without encumbrance to the man whom she loves. The assistant surgeon is stunned. "Really I was hot with shame on her account. I hardly knew how to get back to my apartments at top speed. This is the way they understand the public welfare."

A number of adventures of this kind happen to him. The one that finally overwhelms him is this. He thinks at last he has found a real jewel. Anfissa Nicolaevna is very nice and intelligent. She seems even capable of development. The assistant surgeon sets to work developing her. He takes her a pile of books with a purpose. He notices with a certain amount of pride that Anfissa Nicolaevna reads them all, is interested in them all. The assistant surgeon has already set about the preparations for his marriage: he has even come to live at his partner's. But suddenly he learns, oh horror! that during the very months in which he spoke to her so ardently of the public welfare, Anfissa Nicolaevna had several times sent away the patients who had come to consult him. The assistant surgeon questions her severely, and Anfissa Nicolaevna is forced to own with sorrow, that sometimes she has sent patients away, because the tired-out assistant surgeon was asleep, and it grieved her to wake him. On several occasions she had sent away patients suffering from the Siberian plague, or had even failed to tell the assistant surgeon when he had been summoned to a case of typhoid. "Even in the books," she says, by way of justification, "it is nowhere said that one ought to expose one's beloved

to the Siberian plague." The assistant surgeon is prostrate. She also, this unique woman, is incapable of anything. Finally disillusioned, he determines to run away. "I will give up all these plans," says he; "I will install myself in a little frequented place, give myself up wholly to my duty. This love of women is no use for me. It does me harm, enfeebles my conscience. And when the light of my conscience is gone out, what should I be? Only fit to reproduce the race, and nothing more? No, it's of no use." When the assistant surgeon has left, poor Anfissa Nicolaevna repents sorely. She even writes him a letter in which she says: "Now I understand all, and I shall never fail to wake you after dinner, or at midnight, or after midnight." But the assistant surgeon is obdurate. "They are without intellectual horizon," says he. "Goodness, and all the rest of it, they have. But as to intellectual development, in them it is only narrowness."

Thus does a poor assistant surgeon, isolated in an out-of-the-way part of the world, describe for us in his not very literate language, the same tragic conflict that in the *salons* of the world wrung from Lermontov's disillusioned soul, these magnificent strophes:—

"When with an easy boldness, worldly dames
Touch my cold hands with hands that have not known
What trembling means this long time past, I think,
Could I but turn their merriment to dread,
And hurl into their teeth a verse of brass
All steeped in wrath and bitterness!"

Can this appeal, this longing, strengthened by passion and hate, remain without their echo? The

answer to this is the rapid development of the Russian woman, who, with the sincerity and the special aptness of her sex for carrying everything out to the end, soon becomes herself a stimulus of vast strength to the man's perfectioning. She in her turn is beginning to look for the virtuous and cultured man. It is at least more easy to live with him. Her liberty, her rights, the refinement of her taste, urge her to find this man. But in Russia a virtuous and educated man cannot be a stranger to the historic intellectual mandate to all—"Give up serving society, be of use in the world." In her turn, woman enters upon this same crusade. Niek-rassov in his poem, "The Russian Woman," has already taught us that she loves not only her husband, but the hero and the martyr. Such love alone can make a woman give up escutcheons, titles, wealth, to follow the hero and the martyr into the mines, or the hard labour of Siberia. The free woman is herself beginning to urge man on. His demands recoil upon himself, and in the political movements of late years, instances are not rare in which the influence of the woman has urged on the man to impossibilities, that he may be better, more active, more energetic.

By degrees, the woman, once thrust into the strife of human development, as they call it in Russia, more than meets the demands of the man. She becomes at once his intelligent and educated companion, and a human being having her own personality, and consequently living her own life; leanings to independence appear in her. The woman question arises. Ripening this long time past, it breaks out

at the beginning of Alexander I.'s reign, in the passionate outburst of many women, who feel however the need of independence more than they actually know how to use it. Hence a host of strange follies, shot flying, of course, by the railly and the calumny of the foes of Nihilism. Certainly there were only too many absurdities. At first woman only knew how to ape man, just as he, a hundred years before, had aped Europe. The tendency towards emancipation especially took external forms. Women wore glasses, cut their hair short. Why should not they? Was it really necessary, that just to please men they should be compelled to carry about these heavy, uncomfortable plaits? Women took to smoking cigarettes. Strange customs were to be seen. All this is in most cases ridiculous, and very often even silly. But the behaviour of the masculine sex, during the earlier time of its taking on European habits, abounds with stupidities just as ridiculous. They rigged themselves out in the dress of marquises of the eighteenth century, shaved their beards and wore a queue. Nothing is more natural than childishness of this sort. But in the woman movement towards emancipation, there was something other than the ridiculous side. There was in it, and that with all women, something very serious. Our women quite understood, that to be independent, they must above all become man's equals in regard to instruction and aptitude for work. The education and labour of women soon became the corner-stones of our woman-question, and this even at the time of short hair, a time that was, I need not say, of very short duration.

The aspirations of woman after education and

independent work, met with sympathetic welcome in society. There, these are perhaps the most popular questions. The Government, on the other hand, regarded them unfavourably. Alexander II. did not like these fancies; and as to short hair, at times he personally entered into the struggle. I remember a story that goes back to my university days. At that time, short hair, short dresses, cuffs purposely not as clean as they might be, were already becoming things of the past; they were already the sign of a certain amount of want of thought. I had, however, the opportunity of seeing certain photographs of young ladies of my acquaintance in male dresses, and wearing a funny little hat like a Polish cap. One day, one of these girls with short hair, met the Emperor in the street. It was at St. Petersburg. She bowed and went on her way. Next day, she received a summons from the police. Stupefied and terrified, she went to the police station and found there the superintendent, who, to do him justice, also seemed embarrassed. She asked why she had been summoned. The superintendent's embarrassment grew worse. "You met his Majesty yesterday. . . . His Majesty is displeased. . . . His Majesty has deigned to order —you'll have to sign an agreement not to cut your hair for the future." The Emperor had noticed the girl wearing her hair short, and had at once directed the police to find her and tell her to alter her personal appearance. The superintendent was quite ashamed at playing such a part, and at having to confess that the Emperor concerned himself with such nonsense.

The Government found itself obliged, in spite of itself, to do something for the secondary education of women. The demands of parents were too unanimous. The number of gymnasiums for girls was increased, and now these institutes are more than three hundred. Their programme is almost exactly that of the boys. As to higher education, the women had to conquer each step almost by force. From 1859 to 1861, the women flocked to the universities, although they had no right there. For some time they were tolerated. Then they were expressly forbidden. Thereupon, the women went abroad, and were taught in the higher schools of France and Switzerland. I have had the opportunity of seeing the official correspondence of the Ministry of the Interior, which shows how greatly this course of action disturbed the Government, who thought that even abroad the women students might come under the influence of the Emigration. These considerations forced it to make concessions; and the Government gave authorization for the founding at St. Petersburg and Moscow of a pretence at universities for women. Private enterprise, with its insignificant resources, had the honour of really starting these. Nevertheless, these courses of lectures, especially those of Guérié at Moscow and of Bestoujev at St. Petersburg, were of some service to female education.

At the same time, the Government allowed lectures in medicine for women to be started near the St. Petersburg Academy. This latter institution especially got on very well, thanks to the liberalism of Milioutine, the War Minister, who gave the women a very good place for clinical work—the Nicolas

Hospital. What assured still more positively the continuance of these lectures, was the sympathy of the medical professors, who, though they had the lowest of remuneration, for years gave up time and strength to the teaching of the women students. The latter worked zealously, and in 1883 the number of them that had passed the examination for medicine was already 221.¹ At first, they studied without any hope at all, not knowing whether the Government would or would not give them official rights. The war with Turkey helped the women in some measure. A large number of women medical students went to the war. They showed a zeal so tireless, and such skill, that the Medical Inspector of the Military Hospitals sent the Government a most enthusiastic report,² and asked for some reward for them. The reward was a medal founded for women doctors; a laurel crown closed in above by a two-headed eagle; within the crown the Slav letters G. V. (woman doctor). Thus there was a sort of half-recognition that women who had gone through the course at Nicolas were really looked upon as doctors. But they had no clearly defined rights;

¹ Souchtchinsky: "Medical Women in Russia." In 1883 the whole number of women doctors was 350.

² "The women medical students sent to the army since the opening of the campaign, with their infinite energy and their thorough knowledge of their work, are beyond all praise. The surgical and medical aid they have given have completely justified in this first experiment the hopes of the higher medical authorities. The labours, full of self-abnegation, of the female heads of hospitals, in the midst of typhoid fever, to which more than one fell a victim, have attracted general attention. This first experiment ought to be noted and repeated."—"Summary of Works on Forensic Medicine, published by the Medical Department, 1878," p. 207.

and at the present time, under Alexander III., the lectures are on the point of being suppressed. It is said that they are especially little beloved of the Empress, who wants to restore the Russian woman to the bosom of her family. At all events the new War Minister has deprived the lectures of their "local habitation," and thus puts in danger their very existence. As to the right of the woman doctor to practise, it is at present only tolerated as an experiment. At the end of Alexander II.'s reign, the practising of women doctors in the zemstvo was even forbidden completely; and now the doing of this kind of work by women depends on the governor's caprice.

The Government permits women to practise only in the lower medical walks, as assistant surgeons. That is why the bulk of the women attend the lectures for assistant surgeons—of whom Russia had a sufficiently large number in the last reign. In this capacity, also, the women have shown excellent qualities. In the official report of the Medical Department one reads : "The zemstvos, having had the opportunity of observing the amount of knowledge and the way in which women conduct themselves towards patients, were constantly appealing to the community of Saint George to send them female assistant surgeons."

Outside medicine, woman is finding work in the schools. There are nearly 5,000 schoolmistresses, besides a large number of women class-teachers in secondary schools. Generally speaking, the women fling themselves upon all work not formally interdicted to them. There have even been cases in

which women have practised as lawyers. But the Government does all it can not to allow female labour, wherever this depends upon the Government. Thus, *e.g.*, the women, taking advantage of the law's silence, filled for some time a number of places in the telegraphic service. They did their work irreproachably. Despite this, a few years later, the Government turned all the women out of this department. Thus women are only able to use their strength and skill in private institutions, in all sorts of offices, in private teaching, and so forth.

It is impossible also not to mention the very notable part played by women in the literary movement. Notable from the point of view of quantity rather than of quality. There have been authoresses this long time past, like the poetess Rostopchina or Madame Kokhanovskia. At the present time, women writers must be reckoned almost by hundreds. There is even a special feminine review, into which men are not admitted. It is true, this review is a very poor affair. The women show most capacity in paedagogic literature. In polite literature may be noted especially Madame Markievitch (*nom de plume* Marko-Vovtchok), and another writer who signs herself Vsévolod Krestovsky. The latter is among the most able of our literary workers. Some women, like Madame Gorbounova, are known for their excellent studies of popular life. We have, moreover, women publicists, such as Madame Tsebrikova.¹ Some are like Madame Efiménko,

¹ Among these let me especially mention Madame Nikitine, who, under the name of Gendre, recently published at Paris some social, philosophic, and moral studies, containing notably some

whose works are honourably known even in the scientific world. I am not speaking of purely medical and educational works written by our medical and scholastic women. To sum up, however : I repeat that the entrance of woman into the intellectual life of the country is as yet too recent for her to have produced anything very remarkable. She deserves attention rather for the good she has already done in the country, by raising the moral status of woman, as society and the people grow accustomed to seeing female effort and thought working along the same lines as those of man.

The woman question of equality of rights and of the independence of woman is as yet far from being solved by what women have thus far done, with the aid of the men of the intelliguentia. In Russia, as everywhere else, the economic rule is in man's hands. In his hands also is concentrated all the force that gives superiority in knowledge and in education. Yet the degree of equality the Russian woman has attained, has been sufficient to modify the old character of the mutual relations between men and women, in fact, if not in law. Here, more even than elsewhere, the law seems to ignore the great changes going on in the social life of Russia.

Russians are often accused of an inclination to pose as original and unlike other nations. It is not without some hesitation a Russian uses this word, "originality," in addressing the European public. But how can it be avoided? Must there not be in the mutual relations between man and brilliant passages on revolutionary Russia. [Unhappily dead in 1886.—*Translator.*]

woman in Russia something new and of very special nature, seeing that the European observer cannot understand it? Here once again my thoughts revert involuntarily to M. Leroy-Beaulieu. See how he misrepresents the nature of the Nihilists. A reign of looseness where the principle of free-love has led up to the manners of a tribe of apes, through the which bestial tribe passes now and again a vestal virgin, who forbids herself to actually enjoy the liberty she demands as a principle. The fantastic picture! It is unnecessary to say that M. Leroy-Beaulieu does not draw it from his own observation, but from the gossip of his Russian friends of the conservative school. Why has he not been able to see at a glance the falseness of their tales? Herein is to me exactly the most convincing proof of the originality of the family of the intelliguentia. M. Leroy-Beaulieu and the intelliguentia say the same words, but attach to them quite different meanings. Of free-love there has been discussion among them this long time past. It is in fact a principle that the intelliguentia for some years has tried to give as the basis of the family. Love should be *frée*, and wherever the feeling of such love exists it should show itself freely. But the love of which they speak is not sensuality. Raising love to the height of holiness, the intellectual movement treats sensuality in quite other fashion. Sensuality is a vice indecent in man, dishonourable in a woman. For love—it is a feeling founded on reciprocal respect and sympathy, upon that harmony of mental and physical natures which makes two human beings seem the essential complement one of the other. That is the sense in which the man

of the intelliguentia is speaking, when he demands freedom for love, and declares for love as the only basis of marriage. This love sanctifies the union of man with woman; and when this bond does not exist, marriage, even if accompanied by faithfulness in outward forms, is declared by him immoral. Those who have read the earlier part of this book will easily see that in this the general tendency is again shown of the intelliguentia to replace formal ties by moral ones; to destroy that which is dangerous, not by constraining but by developing the individual; so to manage matters, that the individual acting after his own heart, will only do what is good, and without injury to any. And I ask the reader to bear in mind that here I am only expounding a theory, am only explaining a fact that every one will observe as soon as he begins to take note of the Russian youth.

In fact—this I say frankly—the mutual relations of the young people belonging to the intelliguentia are much more pure than in any other country known to me. For this very reason they are more free. The Russian mother is not afraid to let her daughter go for a walk with a young man. She knows well enough that from this nothing unpleasant will result. Young people meet together to study or merely to amuse themselves; no one keeps watch and ward over them. The girls have more liberty of action, they are less held in than in other countries, less hampered by the fear of “What will people say?” But their freedom is that of a pure imagination. Two young Russian women I knew were studying in Switzerland at the time of the ill-omened war of

1870. Bourbaki's army had to cross the Swiss frontier. This great mass of men, worn out by forced marches, could not all find shelter at first. One night, as a fierce storm was raging and a cold rain rattling on the roof-tops, a number of French soldiers knocked at the door of the house in which my countrywomen were living. The soldiers said they could find no shelter. The mistress of the house, a Swiss, refused to allow them to come in, saying there were no men in the place. The noise woke up the students. They were quite indignant. Why, for such folly as this, should people stay out in the rain? The girls dressed in all haste and asked the soldiers into their room, taking no notice of the landlady's consternation. Of course the honour neither of my countrywomen nor of the French soldiers suffered for this hospitality.

Every Russian who lives abroad is very soon and very often compelled to notice this difference of manners. In Paris, *e.g.*, the mothers of French girls attending the university lectures often go with them. In Russia, this would be so superfluous as to seem a little ridiculous. A French student, on hearing that a Russian girl had gone in a *coupé* with a young fellow he knew, was terribly shocked, and could not believe that such excursions would not lead to love affairs. I do not wish to make generalizations, but this opinion is without a doubt not singular. To a Russian, on the other hand, such suspicions are strangers as a rule. Cannot a man and woman be alone together without at once yielding to temptation? "Then it is you Russians who certainly are deficient in passion," cried the student of whom I

have spoken, convinced at length by his friend's proofs. It is not, however, want of passion. The Russian woman knows how to love without any reservation, to the grave. Read our novels. And look at the statistics that show how every year more than two thousand women go of their own free will into Siberia to their exiled husbands, following them to the very galleys. See the images of poesy and love that woman calls up in this world of the reprobates of society, in the midst of convicts. One of them says to her lover, a criminal :—

“The world has cast thee off,
And darksome is thy soul ;
The world has cast thee off,
But I cling to thee still.”¹

It is not want of passion. Russian life swarms with numberless crimes and miseries into which their passions hurry men and women. But a human being is less the slave of his passions in proportion as his moral instincts are more developed. The girl of the intelligentia has a thoughtful education. From childhood she is accustomed to see in life grave interests in which she can take a greater or less part. Her imagination is not wholly taken up with love affairs and suitors. She would have her scruples about looking upon marriage as a career. She has her ideal in life. She desires so to live that she may not remain a useless creature, but may righteously respect herself. This is why the girl does not yield at once to the first outburst of passion. For her, from her point of view, this would be really a fall. A girl would not think it wrong to enter

¹ Iadrintzev : “Prison and Exile.”

into alliance with a man without her parents' consent, without any marriage benediction, without any legal formality, if only she loves seriously. But she would be ashamed of marrying a man, even with the full consent of her parents and quite legally, if in marrying she was yielding to interest only or to the sensual impulse. This would be a fall, not in the banal sense of that word, but from the point of view of the ideal that the woman has framed for herself as result of the intellectual movement, a fall from the human dignity of woman.

As result of this tendency, love intrigues are far more rare amongst the intelliguentia than in other grades of Russian society ; and love there more frequently than elsewhere brings in its train an alliance that lasts, altogether independently of its legality or non-legality. The family thus constituted is without doubt more pure and more enduring. Man and woman join in it for mutual help, that they may live their life well and usefully for mankind. Entering into their union with care and forethought, they the less often find themselves deceived in the choice each has made. The woman, more evolved than of old, more man's co-mate, becomes his friend, with whom he does not break save for reasons of extreme gravity. That despotism of the man in the family, which becomes a monstrosity among our merchant and small trading class, is very rare among the cultured folk. More frequently the opposite obtains ; there is a certain preponderance of the feminine influence. In short, the family of the intelliguentia has reached a position that is very interesting and makes it an object of envy to women of other classes.

This small primordial association is so well-organized among the intelliguentia that the cries of the reactionaries, which twenty years ago filled the air with declarations that the family was undermined of Nihilism, that the cultured class was immoral, are no longer heard. They are now only repeated by foreigners. As to Russia, even the Katkovs only groan now over the destruction of property, of the State, and so forth: they say nothing about the destruction of the family. A very characteristic fact, that may, perchance, lead people to believe that neither property nor social order will be ruined when the influence of the cultured class has told on them to the same extent as it has at present told upon the family.

CHAPTER III.

The University.—Its *rôle* is secondary.—Governmental idea of the University.—General need of teaching.—Students and professors.—University troubles.—Their cause.—Their uselessness.

In Russia, as everywhere, literature and the school were the chief weapons of education. In some countries, *e.g.* Bulgaria, the school has been a weapon of regeneration. In Russia, the part played by it is much less startling, thrown into much less relief.

Yet the university is of immense importance to the country. It is enough if I state that in our six universities¹ there are nearly 9,000 students, and that in the course of their existence, they have probably instructed at least 100,000 people, thus keeping up continually in the country that scientific thought which is so little developed in Russia. It is difficult to imagine the existence of the intelliguentia without universities. But in this work of civilization,

¹ There are in all nine universities in the empire: those of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kazan, Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, Helsingfors, Dorpat, Warsaw. But the last three are not Russian. The number of Russian universities will, it is hoped, be increased shortly by the creation of one at Tomsk, in Siberia. This is already built and fitted up. All that it wants is students; for the Government, at the last moment, took fright, and will not inaugurate it.

the universities, like the higher schools, worked, so to say, in silence, without thrusting themselves into notice. They did not give the initiative to the intellectual movement, but rather followed its lead. The part that literature plays is, on the other hand, much more visible, much more striking; its work, not perhaps possible without the help of the university, is in the foreground of the picture of the intellectual movement.

The cause of this difference is, beyond all contradiction, this. Literature, though it is under the iron heel of the censorship, none the less is always the direct work of society, and is consequently much more independent. The university, on the other hand, has always been a Government institution. The university is not an institution walled round with independence and growing up through the centuries as a republic of science with rights that are to be respected by Governments the most despotic. The university is but a school founded by the Government, maintained at its expense, and giving a superior education, in conformity with State requirements.

As to expenses, it must, however, be noted that the donations from private persons for the higher schools amount to a very considerable sum. Certain of the higher schools, such as the Lyceums of Jaroslav and Niejine are even founded in the main by the money of individuals. But all this affects only very slightly the type of the higher school. This is a Crown institution like any tribunal or police station. That is its original nature. There was a time when the students had a salary from Govern-

ment, as if by studying at the university they rendered some sort of service. A university professor is a servant of the Crown, a tchinovnik. So completely is the university a Crown institution, that sometimes the Government even entrusts it with the censorship. This custom obtains at the present time in the privilege the universities have of publishing their scientific researches with the control of their own censorship alone.

The passing of university examinations not under the special control of the Government gave students, until recently, the right of practising in medicine, law, etc. The diploma carried with it even the right to a "civil rank." Now, in point of fact, the Government has, by the regulation of 1885, taken away from the university the right of granting diplomas, and has created a special commission for the granting of them. It is a characteristic fact, that at the same time this regulation imposes on the universities a more stringent Government control. It is illogical enough, no doubt, but the regulation of 1885 is so completely a result of the struggle of parties, that it is difficult to expect any logic in it. Besides, the fiscal character of the university is clear beyond all need of evidence.

Before the regulation of 1885, the Government gave the Corporation of Professors various rights, now small, now large, exactly as it did to any other State institution. It arranged the relations of the professors with the students, and shortened or lengthened, in this direction or in that, the programme of studies, out of mere caprice. If the fancy took it, the Government would shut up a university, or

transport it to another town, as if it were a post-office. The university has no privilege, be it ever so small, that the Government cannot take from it without any violation of the law. The Government even thinks it has the right to demand that the professors give their lectures with a particular tone. According to this theory, the ministry for the time being changes the regulations. Any inclination on the part of a professor to teach his pupils the data of science regardless of the fashion in which the Government understands this science, is in Russia always looked upon as the evidence of a certain spirit of opposition or even of revolt. In the time of Alexander I., the university, then only just instituted, was the object of pitiless persecution. Certain rumours as to a liberal spirit of which the university of Kazan was accused, led to the sending of one Maghnitzky as official investigator. He was a well-known opponent of education, who, after having been a Jacobin and an exile on that account, had repented and turned coat. This contemptible person made a report to the Emperor, that the university was so imbued with an unhealthy spirit that the only thing left was to destroy it, as an example to future generations. Alexander I. thought he would play the generous. "Why destroy that which can be modified?" said he. And the modifications began.

To give an idea of the first demands of the Government, it is enough to say, that the mathematical professor, when talking about triangles, was to direct the students' hearts heavenwards, reminding them of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, who form a unity just like the three angles of a

triangle. A student put under arrest could not be liberated until he had received absolution for his sins. In the time of the Emperor Nicolas, the celebrated professor, Granovsky, complained to his friends that he was not allowed, in his lectures on universal history, to mention either the French Revolution or Luther and the Reformation. Moreover, Nicolas himself laid bare very clearly his ideas as to education in the speech he made at Kiev in 1839. "You are studying very nicely," said he to the students; "but that is not enough. Science by itself does not give good results. I want sons that are faithful to the throne—a devotion without limits, a submission that never reasons, an absolute obedience." Then turning to the professors, the Emperor shook his finger at them. "And you," said he, "take care; science may go its way, but if you are not careful to develop moral ideas in the students' minds, if you do not work upon their political convictions, I shall demand an account of you after my wont." The last two Emperors have never visited the universities, but the statesmen of to-day are capable of repeating what Nicolas said, almost word for word. Thus two years ago, in the university of Kiev, the Governor-general, Drenteln, said plainly to the professors, that on the university "lies the heavy responsibility of the crimes recently committed in Russia. The root of the evil," he went on, "is in you professors' hankering after popularity." In short, the Government is always trying to impose on the university a certain political function: that of preparing good "tchinovniks," and stirring up in the minds of the young people a current of ideas

favourable to it. The university, as the Government would have it, is one of those offices of the Department of Public Opinion of which Napoleon I. dreamed.

Yet the university, under no matter what programme, no matter what control, remains in itself, by the very nature of its work, a source of knowledge, and knowledge needs to be free. As a consequence, the university has a natural tendency to free itself from administrative protection, to become a free temple of free science. Certainly, it has never yet been able to attain this end ; but it is clear that in receiving, no matter in how small doses, this liberty, it unconsciously communicates to the students ideas that are not very likely to develop into those of a “devotion without limits, a submission that never reasons, an absolute obedience.” Thus the university is in conflict with the Government. The latter has, doubtless, in its hands, not only the general control of the university, but the choice of the professors. This is a powerful weapon ; but then the Government is forced to choose these professors from the intelligentia. Thanks to these complications, the part played by the university becomes comparatively of less moment. If the Government is not sufficiently powerful to alter it exactly according to its own taste, the university is at all events prevented from attaining the end for which it strives.

At the commencement of its existence, and for a period of some fifty years, the Government pressure upon it was helped by the presence of a large number of foreigners among the professors. This time of “the reign of the Germans”—they were for the most

part Germans from Germany or the Baltic provinces —left a painful after-effect. Of course, Russia had too few men of learning to be able to do without these foreigners ; and in any case she owed them a certain debt of gratitude. But the service they rendered her cost her dear. The predominance of the foreign element sixty years ago was so great, that in some universities the lectures were never given in the Russian tongue, but always in German or Latin. Those professors who lectured in Russian, were regarded by the “German section” as Liberals. Moreover, it was not easy then for Russians to get the berth of professor, since the German section did everything they could to prevent them from obtaining degrees. The men belonging to the German section, even when they were real men of science and not mere assistants, had in any case this fault, they did not know Russia or the Russians. They despised the one as a savage country, the others as an inferior race. These men were irreproachable servants of the Government ; and until a party was formed in the university of a certain number of Russian *savants* by birth and by heart (for some foreigners learned to love their new land), the university was of course doomed to play a very small part in the intellectual movement. Science held aloof from life of which it knew nothing and in which it had no interest. Nevertheless, even in this earlier time of the universities’ existence, we had an instance of a higher school that founded a tradition in Russian education. The Lyceum of Tzarskoë Sielo, in the reign of Alexander I., thanks to his liberal direction, created a school. It produced a

whole series of men of letters and of politics, who perished in great numbers in the attempted *coup d'Etat* of December 14th, 1825. A professor of this Lyceum, Kounitzine, has especially distinguished himself in the history of Russian education. Pouchkine, once a pupil in this same Lyceum, dedicated to him this toast:—

“To Kounitzine, the homage of heart and of drinking!
He has created us, kindled the flame of us,
Raised of the temple of knowledge the corner-stone,
Lighted the pure lamp of truth on the altar.”

A second brilliant time in our university history corresponds with the dark reign of Nicolas. This was when the university of Moscow gathered together a certain number of learned men, Russians pure and simple, who tried to establish a connection between the sciences and the demands of Russian life. The celebrated Granovsky, of whom I have spoken, was at the head of a complete school, and played a part quite unique in the development of Russian education. In this case, as in the others, the influence of the professors was not of a political character. To judge from the outcries of our reactionaries, you would think that our professors dealt only with politics. In reality, this is not the case. The *élite* of our professors, the very ones against whom these outcries are directed, lay before them a very different aim. They are trying to give students the true and not the official science; they are trying to make their students men. Theirs is a purely humanitarian work, which may bring about indirectly certain political results, like anything else that serves in one way or another to develop the

individual. This is what we see in Granovsky's time, and this is what is going on up to the present day. Already this is enough to arouse in the Government the greatest uneasiness. In Nicolas' time, the rulers frankly looked upon education as an inevitable evil not to be entirely got rid of, but to be kept rigidly within due bounds. The number of students in each university was reduced to three hundred. When the nobility of the government of the Baltic, not used to these homœopathic doses of education, begged the Emperor to increase the number of students, Nicolas refused, adding that the nobles could enter the corps of cadets to any extent, and that military service was the very thing for the noble class.¹

Under Alexander II., the restrictions on the number of students were abolished, but, by way of compensation, the lecture fees were raised. Until then they were about fifty roubles a year. The students did not pay for any particular subject or examination, but in the lump for their tuition. In point of fact, under the new regulations, the fees have been raised. They are 158 roubles on the average, though they vary greatly, since now they are paid for each particular subject taught. The Government has not, however, shown any generosity in the expenditure for national education. In 1884, the total State expenditure was 800 million roubles, whilst on education scarcely 34 millions were spent. Even this expenditure was not under the control of the Ministry of Education alone, but was

¹ Russian translation of Lorentz' History, with Markov's Appendices.

spread over various departments ; since in Russia almost every ministry has its own special schools, institutes, seminaries, academies.¹ The Ministry of Public Instruction has a budget of only 20 million roubles (2,600,000 roubles for the universities). Thus this ministry has only 2·5 per cent. as its share of the total expenditure of the State.

Whilst it acts thus prudently on behalf of the diffusion of education, the Government also tries to keep education under watchful control, not that science may flourish, but that it may not become a source of perverse ideas. This constant pressure is perhaps the explanation of the modest part played by the university in the intellectual movement of the country. It is a remarkable fact, that the representatives of the university have not played a striking part. Granovsky was in this respect quite an exception. If we run over all the political or social movements that have affected Russian society, we find that they always emanate from journalists, and not from professors : Bielinsky, Hertzen, Khomjakov, Aksakov, Tchernychevsky, Dobrolioubov, Pissarev, Bakounine, Lavrov, etc. The same thing may be said of the purely scientific doctrines that have permeated Russia : Darwinism, positivism, Karl Marx' economic theories, utilitarianism, etc. Those who imported these theories were not professors. And if we do find some professors among

¹ Besides the universities and primary schools, the Ministry of Public Education has nearly 210 gymnasiums and pro-gymnasiums, with 55,000 pupils and nearly seventy real schools with 15,000 pupils. The clergy (the holy synod) keep up some sixty academies and seminaries with 15,000 pupils. The War Minister, in his cadet schools, gives education to more than 12,000 youths.

those who exercise a greater or less influence on public opinion, they are always old ones who have been unable to conform to the ways of the university and have been turned out from it. A galaxy of men of worth, in literature, in the social or political life of the time, have had this origin : Stassioulevitch, Kostomarov, Kaveline, Spassovitch, Chtchapov, Dragomanov, Engelgard, Chelgounov, Pypine, Ziber, and others. Of these, Dragomanov was even compelled to emigrate. Chtchapov ended his days in Siberia : Engelgard and Chelgounov were in prison half their lives. The position of professor is scarcely compatible with the playing of any part of importance in the intellectual movement. Thus, *e.g.*, Sietchenov, although he took no part in politics, but became an advocate of materialism, soon lost his place. Pure patriotism alone has prevented him from leaving his country, as he has been offered a chair in several German universities.

The professor is shut in by the walls of the university. But even within these walls it is not he that rules, it is not he that gives tone to the place, it is not he that gives his students this or that bent of mind. The university is the dream of our provincial youth. It is for them an indescribable sanctuary, a temple of knowledge, a place where the young man can solve all questions, whence he issues full-armed. All roads lead to the university. I have seen a young seminarist go on foot from Archangelsk to Moscow (nearly 1,200 verstes). Another young man of my acquaintance, a Siberian, in order that he might get into the university, entered as footman the service of a noble-

man, who was coming to St. Petersburg. There is no privation our provincial youth will not undergo to get to the university. When he does get there, he is generally in great poverty, in some dirty room, dying of hunger. The students in the various schools belong most frequently to the class that is not very well off, often even to the quite poor classes.

In his dreams, the youth thinks but little of the personality of his professors. Does their teaching answer the expectations of youth or not—is a secondary question for him. If it is answered in the negative—well, he searches for a master in books or in the writings of foreign authors. This is a most notable fact. Certainly, he will always find among the professors some men belonging to the best type of the intelliguentia, and hence always ready to help the young in their desire to become acquainted with true science. But these are not very many in number, and are very often commonplace enough. As a rule, the professors' influence on the development of certain tendencies in our youth is quite insignificant. The young people teach themselves under the influence of things quite outside the university. The latter only plays a mechanical part. It furnishes the students with library, museums, laboratories. It brings them together by hundreds, by thousands, and thus makes it possible for them to develop themselves by their education one of the other. The college of professors lives apart—is even fortunate if it is not in direct antagonism to the students.

The military and police discipline to which the

university was subject under Nicolas certainly did not raise the authority of the professors in the eyes of the students. By the regulation of 1863, the college of professors was made more free of administrative despotism. On the other hand, the students, as a body, were decidedly made more amenable to the law. The law only recognised in the student a mere individual, and hunted down with rigour every manifestation of *esprit de corps*. As the students, by the mere fact of their position, are a corporation, the college of professors directing the university was in a completely false position. Whenever a professor has to do with a student, he comes into collision, not with an individual, but with a collective personality, common needs, interests and actions. The corporation of the students could only be ignored by ignoring the students generally. This the professors did, as the only way of avoiding a breaking of the law at every step. Thus the law of 1863, whilst it considerably strengthened the professorial colleges; made yet more deep the abyss between them and the students. As a matter of fact, this regulation, hated by the reactionaries for its good points, is now abolished. The new law of 1885 places the professors under an unlimited power of inspection, almost as complete as that over the students. Perhaps this will bring them together; but the measure is too recent for its consequences to be seen as yet.

From what has gone before, it may be gathered how slight is the foundation for the accusation against the professors, of having urged the students to revolt. Not only did the professors not want

to do this; they could not do it. If at times the professors can be accused of the movement among the students, it is only in the sense that the students have very little confidence in them. Thus the latest outbursts at the University of Kiev—all the students, nearly two thousand young men, have been expelled—broke out because the students did not believe a word their rector said to them. He deceived them every minute. The risings of the students are due generally to causes that the professors, to their shame be it said, are sometimes liable to accentuate, but that they can never remove. These disorders are an unhappy accident of Russian life, and perhaps there is hardly one generation of students in the four years of lectures that has not gone through this experience.

What is the cause of these events, and what is their significance? What do the students desire? Do they really think they will actually effect any change in Russia by their revolts? These are the questions the reader is likely to be asking, as he never hears the students' explanations, and never finds in the Russian journals a true description of their rebellions. In fact, most frequently these have no aim, but only causes. Our students, like all the cultured class, regard the Government unfavourably. Not infrequently there are among them men of quite revolutionary ideas. And there are also among them a few who are revolutionists by conviction and conduct, who are already forming plans for revolutionary action. But these are not the chief actors in the disorders at the universities. On the contrary, they do all they can to prevent agitations

during which their own position is made more difficult. Not to support their comrades is impossible. They would lose the position and popularity indispensable to a conspirator. To take part in the agitation is to be almost certainly transported or at least to find themselves under police surveillance, *i.e.* to lose all chance of working for the revolutionary cause by plot or by propaganda. In most cases, the agitation begins among the students who have nothing in common with the revolutionists. Why then do they get up these disturbances? How can they do otherwise, if to the student everything is forbidden, so that he cannot move without committing a crime, and as consequence bringing down on him a lecture, a coarse and brutal call to order, a punishment? Some students meet for a simple chat; the suspicious police begin to prowl about under their windows. Within the very walls of the university, every step is spied out by the agents of Government. The slightest subversive word uttered by a student is at once followed by reprisals. A forbidden book—and the forbidden books are the interesting ones to read—is a pretext for arrest, and even for transportation. The students meet on the school staircase: the inspector brutally disperses them. Should the idea take them of intervening on behalf of their ill-treated comrades, the students commit a crime if they present a petition. All these futile pieces of red-tapism, going on day after day, hour after hour, breed, by degrees, a discontent that a mere nothing may turn into a wild outburst.

At Kharkov, in January, 1882, in some circus or theatre, a dispute broke out between a number of

students and a reactionary journalist who was in the habit of writing pamphlets against the students. One of the latter called him a coward ; the journalist flung his glass in the student's face. One would think the university authorities would have taken no notice of this quarrel outside the university precincts, for, by law, the students outside the university are under the jurisdiction of the general police alone. But no. The university council must show its zeal, and expel these insolent young men from the university. This infamous kowtowing to the police angered the students ; they set about defending their comrades ; they held meetings ; they kicked up a row. The despotic police came on the scene. The university was closed. Fifty-five students were expelled for disorder.

In October, 1882, disorder broke out in the university of St. Petersburg. A well known financier organized for the students, as a free gift, a phalanstère to contain one hundred and fifty men. This man of money has not a very high reputation in Russia. They say the tsar himself on the occasion in question said : "It is easy to make free gifts with stolen money." The students felt more hurt at, than grateful for, this present. But about a hundred of them turned up at the solemn festival organized on the occasion of the inauguration, and offered the donor, in the name of the students, a flattering address of thanks. The rest were indignant. What right had the others to speak in their name and to say things that, as they thought, compromised their honour ? They drew up a declaration in which they stated that the address

was the individual act of those who had signed it. What follows? Their conduct is declared illegal. How dare they meet? How dare they draw up a declaration? The university authorities appeal in hot haste to the police for aid. Thereupon disorders.

It is the same story in the latest outbreak at Kiev in 1884. The university was getting ready for the celebration of its jubilee. Now, it must be said at the outset, that the University of Kiev has a bad reputation throughout Russia. A number of its professors have been mixed up in abuses committed by the municipality. Some of them are known as informers, and that to such an extent that they are despised by the police. "With us," said a well-known member of society in Kiev, "it is not gendarmes and police spies that are to be feared. It is the university professors." It will be understood that between the students and such a set of professors, the relations are not very harmonious. Knowing this, the rector of the university, fearing that during the jubilee the students' discontent would show itself in some form or other, tried to avoid this by paying court to them. He even invited them to take part in the organising of the affair. Their agreement did not last very long. The students had no intention of creating a disturbance. They really wished to organise the affair so that it might be a *fête* of knowledge, an intellectual festival. Given the persecution, then in vogue, of all knowledge and intellect, this plan involuntarily took on the character of a manifestation compact of opposition. Suddenly the rector changed his tone, and declared roundly that he was sole master in the business, and

would organise everything as he pleased. The students set an agitation on foot. Why then had they been invited? Only for the purpose of insult and of reminding them that legally they were of no account? The rector, seeing that the discontent was growing, decided that, in order to prevent disorders, the students should not be admitted to the jubilee. This absurd and unexpected measure soon bore fruit. The students who were not to be admitted to their own festival, who had been irritated and insulted anyhow, assembled a few hours before the ceremony, in the street in front of the university, hissed the rector and various notable representatives of reaction, *e.g.* Pobiédonostsev, and threw stones at their carriages. In the evening they went and made a row at the rector's and broke his windows. That is the way in which the university celebrated its jubilee. Some days later, all the students, even those who, to the knowledge of every one, had taken no part in the demonstration, were expelled from the university. Katkov had the impudence to defend the equity of this punishment. "The students who did not take part in the demonstration," he declared in the *Moscow Gazette*, "are responsible for not having prevented it." That is reactionary logic. The students are not recognised as a corporate body; they are forbidden to hold any meeting, to have any organisation, and at the same time the principle of corporative responsibility is admitted.

The great majority of university troubles are of just this character. They are unpremeditated; they are a reflex protest, stimulated by one or other of

the numberless pretexts furnished by the entire absence of all rights for the students. Despotism and outbreak are always the two sides of one and the same medal; but assuredly among young men easily excited, despotism foments outbreak more frequently than elsewhere. The university troubles, whose result is the loss of so many hundreds of young men, are thus an inevitable misfortune, and will be until the time when at length Russia shall have strong laws that shall hold sacred the rights of every individual and of every body of individuals.

CHAPTER IV.

Literature.—Social part played by our literature.—Literature a means of expressing ideas that the press cannot.—Art an *objet de luxe*.—Literature under the protection of fashion.—The social novel.—Birth of the press.—Tendency of literature.—Evils caused by it to artistic writers.—The censorship.—The illegal press.—Literature swallowed up of satire.—Chtchédrine.—Poets and story-tellers.—Ouspensky and Garchine.

THE part played by literature is very different. For 150 years, *i.e.* since its birth,¹ literature has, in the hands of the intelliguentia, been the chief motive power of political and social development in Russia. During this time it was the most remark-

¹ The written language has been in existence nearly two centuries. Ancient Russia, and Russia under the Muscovite tzars had already some germs of literature, that at times gave rise to works of great value—Nestor's Chronicle, the Song of the Legion of Igor, or the Muscovite comedy “Froi Skibieiev.” But generally speaking, this literature is scholastic and without style. Yet the popular literature—songs, ballads, tales—was a genuine treasure of poesy. Written literature only began to grow after Peter the Great; in his reign the alphabet was actually formed. The European influence, under which Russian literature came into being, told also on the language, which in the eighteenth century was so corrupt, that at the present time it seems a thing of ridicule to many. The time of Pouchkine and of Gogol may be looked upon as that in which the Russian language began to free itself, and Russian literature to take on a truly national character.

able product of the national genius. Thus its study is of deep interest, and it would be well if the English public had a good *r  sum  * of it. Interesting in itself, by its original colours, its boldness of form and sometimes of ideas, it is yet more interesting as a faithful reflex of Russian life. In spite of the rigour of the censorship, Russian literature, take it altogether, is characterised by its extreme outspokenness, its marked leaning towards artistic truth.

In spite of the many translations that have been published of late years, Russian literature is still very imperfectly known.¹ Much to my regret, I cannot in this place give to it that study the necessity of which I feel, but which would demand also far too much space. I shall therefore advisedly lay much more stress on the social than on the purely literary side of the question.

In the chapter that I devoted to explaining the nature of the cultured class, I was constantly obliged to speak of literature. Russian literature is, in fact, its best beloved offspring and the reflex of all its characteristic traits. The general tendencies of the intelliguentia have left their impress on literature, giving it at once a serious tone. I am not using the

¹ The admission of articles such as Mademoiselle Olga Smirnoff has recently published in so important a periodical as the *Nouvelle Revue*, seems to me conclusive on this point. In them Mademoiselle Smirnoff speaks of the literary merits of various archbishops (Philar  te and Innocent), and at the same time mentions in a patronising way Chtch  drine (Siltkov). This is not even an inaccurate appreciation on her part. I seem to see the smile of Madame Adam, if she herself were to read the ponderous tomes of our Russian Bossuets, and with her fine literary taste compare with such as they, authors of the brilliancy and power of Chtch  drine.

word "serious" in the sense of tiresome. What I mean is, that our literature by conviction, in idea, is not merely amusing, and does not set before it as aim the creation of merely beautiful or clever works. So much the more it is not, Heaven preserve us! a calling or a means of livelihood. It looks on itself as a great social work, a grand weapon of progress, a mighty means of developing the national thought. For a genuine Russian writer, nothing is more painful and humiliating than to be forced to prostitute himself to the public taste, and to work only for filthy lucre. No accusation is a greater insult to a journalist than that he thinks above all of the number of copies of his work sold.

When M. Souvorine,¹ chief editor of the *New Time*, declared it was time literature descended from its pedestal and understood that it was a calling like any other, that it was subject to the same laws of supply and demand, and that in this there was no humiliation—his article was received as the most shameless, the most disgusting literary prostitution.

As yet, every writer of any worth, of any honesty, holds quite other ideas than these as to himself and his work. He is a labourer in the social cause; he must do, not what the public wants, but that which he himself thinks right and good. This conception of literature, natural enough considering the char-

¹ It may be that the article in question was not by M. Souvorine, but by his most intimate co-worker, M. Bourénine, but this comes to the same thing, as they work together, and may be ranked at exactly the same level as far as concerns the intellectual and moral elements they introduce into Russian literature.

acter of the intelliguentia, was strengthened greatly by the school of Art for Art, by Pouchkine and others. Later on, this same school was accused of indifference as to life, a reproach wholly devoid of foundation. Certainly Pouchkine says imperiously to the public :—

“Depart ! What need
Has peaceful poet of you ?”

Certainly he cries out :

“Oh poet, set no value on the people’s love.”

In the admirable words of Ivan Tourguéniev, he has left a magnificent legacy to the Russian writer :—

“By the free way
Go where thy free mind will.”

But to see in all this indifference to life is ridiculous. It is only a protest against the subjection of the writer to the yoke of time and the hour. To serve society and history honourably is quite another thing. Pouchkine will not be the slave of circumstances, just because he will serve society and history. When with the same pride he declares : “I have built a monument grander than any human work,” he at once explains wherein consists the grandeur of this monument. The poet was of use to men ; he sang of pity for the pitiable. Art and thought are to be free, but of course in the sense, that this free art and free science are of the greatest use to man in raising him, widening out his horizon, unveiling for him the mysteries of life. So strong is this yearning to serve humanity, that twice already two of the most able men in Russian literature have been urged by it

to acts bordering on the foolish. Gogol left his "Dead Souls," to publish an absurd "Correspondence with Some Friends," as soon as his "mind diseased" fancied the latter "would be more useful." Just now Léon Tolstoi is abandoning art with contempt, as he is convinced that "he has been teaching men without himself knowing what he was teaching."

The naturalist school is impregnated with this idea of serving humanity. This naturalist school, which may be said to have founded Russian literature, itself came into being at the time of the crudest reaction, that of Nicolas I. The intelligentsia saw too plainly the absolute impossibility of a direct contest. The best of the strength of Russia, not exterminated by the reprisals that followed the outburst of December 14, set to work to prepare the better future by the intellectual development of the country. This development became an object of worship to it. That same reaction, however, that persecuted science, enslaved the school, tolerated no political or social activity, made the task of these pioneers very hard. What method was to be followed—what means to be employed? Everything was crushed, but not to the same extent. Entering upon the domain of art, the cultured man felt at once that here he could do something, whilst in any other nothing was to be done.

In reality, here also, the censorship was by no means idle. Our censors, *e.g.* forbade a poem, because it spoke of love, which "is unbecoming in Lent." The author had written :

"Oh, could I, silent, and in lonely lands,
Unseen of all, dwell near thee and at peace!"

The censor struck this out, and added this note : " This means that the author does not wish to continue his service to the Emperor, so that he may be always with his mistress. Besides, one cannot be at peace except near the Gospel, not near women."¹ The guard-house, in which young writers were shut up like schoolboys, whenever the whim took the administration, was always full. Nevertheless, art was looked upon as too insignificant to be feared. The Emperor Nicolas was not a poltroon. He was not going to be afraid of that which, as he thought, had no real strength. And what strength could art have ? A mind brought up amidst bayonets, cannon, the sabres of gendarmes, could only fancy itself a power in the crudest way. Certainly, a seditious proclamation, or even a criticism of the acts of the Government, any direct intervention on the part of literature in political affairs—that was a danger. But art ! What an idea ! When he had recalled from exile Pouchkine, the Emperor Nicolas asked him this question : " Tell me frankly, Pouchkine, if you had been on the 14th of December in St. Petersburg, should you have taken part in the rising ? " " Assuredly, sire," answered the poet.

This outspoken frankness pleased the Emperor ; and when Pouchkine promised him not to meddle with politics any more, he believed him fully. If he did not actually deal with politics, why should he not be allowed to write ? What harm can any poem do ? The Emperor Nicolas became the open protector of Pouchkine, and his censor. Thanks to

¹ Historical data as to the Russian censorship.

this protection, the poet was able to withstand the pernicious action of the censorship. In the same way the Emperor accorded his protection to Gogol. The celebrated comedy, "The Reviser," was forbidden by the censorship. This interdict displeased the Emperor, and he gave the order to place on the stage this cruel satire on his own administration. In one of its acts, the prefect cries out to the public, who are roaring with laughter, "What are you laughing at? At yourselves?" The Emperor was one of those who laughed, but not of those who understood the bitter meaning of this apostrophe. The Emperor did not stand alone in treating art with this contemptuous indulgence. The idea was general. Some amused themselves with it, as a luxury. Others simply despised it. A general, a superior officer of Lermontov, said to him once: "Is it really possible you make verses? Blush, young man. You are an officer and a gentleman." The general was not angry that Lermontov was in his verses very revolutionary for his time and country. No, he did not even know that he was. But an occupation so useless seemed to him unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

This contemptuous inattention created for art a position of privilege. Political literature, no matter how mild, was not tolerated at any price. But, under cover of polite literature, Gogol writes his satires; Herzen composes "Whose Fault is it?" and the "Memoirs of Doctor Kroupov," in which he attacks the very basis of our society; Siergueis Aksakov, himself a censor, writes his "Family Chronicle," and "The Early Years of Bagrov's

Grandson.”¹ These, it may be without their author knowing it, pronounce a terrible sentence upon the serf-owners. The law has no notion of the rights of man: everything is held in humiliation and bondage. Lermontov is never weary of calling men to freedom; he places men above all conventional laws. The fundamental idea, “Art for art,” was itself at that time in Russia most revolutionary. Man there was in everything a cipher; nobody cared about him. But in art, this humbled personality recognised no authority of Government or of society as above itself. “I do as I will,” it says, “at the dictates of my reason, my talent and my conscience, and no one has power over me.”

This relative liberty attracted a multitude of able men to letters. Any one who did not try to write verses, novelettes, a novel, was a rarity. Men gave themselves up to art with a sort of religious fervour. Able men were sought out and fostered with care. To discover a man of literary talent was an honour, a duty to every member of the intelliguentia. In this way the Little Russian poet, Chevtchenko was saved for literature, and when later, after a satire on the tzar, he was sent into Turkestan as a simple soldier, the help of his admirers lightened considerably the weight of this terrible punishment.² Gogol, coming to St. Peters-

¹ Aksakov’s novels, not even properly appreciated in Russia, are wholly unknown outside it. Yet they are the best of the Russian romances, except those of Léon Tolstoi.

² Chevtchenko did not write in Russian, but always in Little Russian. “I can, but I will not,” says he in his satire. In exile, he was forbidden to write or draw (he was a painter of ability).

burg from the provinces, without friends or money, was only able to make his way and give himself seriously to the development of his powers by virtue of the protection of Pouchkine and some others. In the same way also the talents of Koltzov were enabled to evolve. He was a small provincial tradesman, who composed admirable songs full of the popular spirit. In this way, by the natural force of circumstances, and by a conscious premeditation also, many forces, almost all that intelligent Russia owned, were drawn irresistibly towards polite literature.

The naturalist school, at whose head Gogol, himself a disciple of Pouchkine, is usually placed, had as its principle a strict fidelity to real life; and this principle, strengthened by the influence of Balzac, was in harmony, as no other could have been, with the tendencies of the intelliguentia towards the service of society. Naturally, the more nearly art approaches reality, the more it becomes the reflex of tendencies. Thus is born the social romance, which, with the satire, is the characteristic of Russian literature.

The social romance describes society rather than the individual; and this is the more true to art, as in fact the individual only develops within the society. Then this fact gives art a direct social bearing. The artist becomes a politician, criticism becomes more or less social criticism, since in

This punishment was as bad as the galleys in the time of Nicolas, and was very often inflicted. Bestoujev-Marlinsky, Poléjaïev and others of the most eminent authors of this period were subjected to it.

analysing artistic works criticism is only concerned to speak of real life, its aspirations and its complications.

In critical art, the name of Vissarion Biélinsky must especially be borne in mind. Tourguéniev compared his influence upon the development of Russian civilization to that of Lessing in Germany. Of incomparable artistic instinct, of extreme honesty, gifted with intellect capable of the most profound social conceptions, Biélinsky made art criticism such a chair for human teaching, that Russia, whatever place she ultimately reaches, will never cease to mourn for him. Biélinsky again was a master of the Russian tongue, and in his work is always as powerful as he is graceful. For style, Biélinsky yields only to Granovsky, of whom I have already spoken, and whose style is the final word of perfectness as yet spoken by the Russian language.

Thus the intelliguentia, unable to play a social part directly, compensated itself with art, a little world wholly its own, in which it judged, analysed, created its conceptions of the social ideal. To the powers that be, this little world apart seemed but a toy. Really it is the actual Russian life judged by the nascent thought of the cultured class. This toy teaches men to know themselves. It works out the greater part of that stupendous labour of the national conscience that later on forced Alexander II. to undertake certain reforms. For twenty to thirty years, letters and art criticism took the place of everything in Russia—of philosophy, of sociology, of political literature. By art, Russia became convinced that individual rights were irrefragable, that

the emancipation of the serfs was an absolute necessity, that self-government was of primary importance.

This noble work of artistic literature begot in Russia a profound respect for art; a respect not to be destroyed by those vicissitudes of the after-time that produced in art a genuine revolution.

This revolution took place at the beginning of the reign of Alexander II. The forces that had been gathered together during the preceding time, at last began to make their mark upon politics, and compelled the Government to give greater freedom to the press. Until then, art literature had reigned without a rival. Thenceforward, it had to fall back upon itself and give place to the political press. This is in itself quite normal, and to regret it would be foolish. But political literature was not content with occupying the place that was of right its own; it transgressed its own limits, and even trespassed on those of the romance, thus taking for a long while from art that moral freedom, without which it cannot develop.

This revolution, as always, had its fatal causes. After the Crimean campaign, Russia seemed to wake as from a heavy sleep. She saw herself on the brink of an abyss. Confidence in the power of the Government gave way. The country was in danger. Every one was talking of the necessity for reform. Political activity became on a sudden the pressing need of the moment, and to this need literature could not be irresponsible. The political press seemed created perforce. I say "perforce," for Alexander II.'s Government was by no means

disposed to put up with its appearance. But the intelliguentia felt it was already strong enough to act alone. The political press, impossible in Russia, should appear abroad. "Now or never," said Alexander Hertzen, when he heard the news of Nicolas' death; and at once he set on foot in London the *Polar Star*, which thereupon took the place of the celebrated *Bell*. "*Vivos voco*," the motto of the *Bell*, was to become a prophecy. The journal, of course forbidden in Russia, nevertheless went everywhere, even to the Winter Palace, and made for Hertzen a following. From that moment the forbidding of political literature as a whole in Russia was an absurdity. The Government was forced to relax the reins, and this the more as, under pressure of circumstances, it was compelled to undertake important reforms, and by virtue of these to admit into the ministry and into the Government commissions those whom it most hated — the reds, Nicolas Milioutine and his co-religionists. The party of reform, once holding a certain position in the Government, was not slow in appealing to the press for support, knowing surely that if the least liberty were given to it, the press would with all its strength defend reform. This foresight was splendidly justified. The press, of which at last it was possible to speak, produced many men of ability, of whom let us note Tchernychevsky and Dobrolioubov.¹

In a few months the reactionaries were so badgered by the press that they did not dare to

¹ They both wrote in the *Contemporary*, which soon became the most influential organ of the Russian press.

breathe a word, and if they did—as in the journal of the nobility, *Viest*—it was only to become an object of general derision. In a word, the press so dealt with the question of the emancipation of the serfs (the first on the orders of the day), that any retrograde step was simply impossible.

The press went far beyond the limits that the reds of the Government thought necessary. The cultured class then saw in its dreams a general revolution in Russia—perhaps peaceful, perhaps bloody—in the clouds, as to details; but in any case reconstructing the whole country on the basis of liberty and justice. The press was preparing the ground for this, was attacking at all points violence, injustice, exploitation, was trying to exterminate “all that was unworthy, savage, evil.” Their certainty that the revolution was at hand deceived all minds, and threw them into a state of feverish excitement. Every one was on the watch for great events. The moment seemed and really was exceptional. It was necessary to work without losing a second.

How was the literature of art to shun this work—that which for so long a time had served Russia so bravely, and by its labour had built itself a monument of greater grandeur than any human work? The answer was never in doubt. The tendency to work for the commonweal carried literature along with resistless force. Art, beauty, the eternal, nature—all were perfect, had been perfect, and would again be thus in the coming time. But now there is fighting to be done. Romance, novel, poetry, all become “with a purpose.” They accuse, hurl forth proclamations, arouse, paint the portrait

of virtuous citizens such as had never been seen. Each of them tries to bring and urge forward some idea. At the head of this romance with a purpose, that has lasted long and even now has not wholly vanished, must assuredly be placed Tchernychevsky's "What is to be Done?" This made in Russia an unprecedented stir, was soon forbidden, and for long years was the gospel of Russian youth. They imitated its heroes, and formed ideas on theirs. From the point of view of art this romance is, however, quite commonplace. Tchernychevsky is great as a thinker; as an economist he is the first in Russia; as publicist he has very few rivals; but he is not a romance writer.¹ Taken singly, many scenes in "What is to be Done?" may be looked upon as passable. They get hold of the reader by their thought, not by their art. In the novels with a purpose of Mikhaïlov (Cheller), Kholodov, Ghirse, and others, the qualities of "What is to be Done?" are only to be found in microscopic doses, whilst its faults have grown in quite an inverse proportion. Writing with a moral does not exist in the progressist camp alone. The works of the reactionaries Stebnitsky, and, later, Avséienko, Boleslas Markévitch, and others, are in this respect yet more monstrous. Markévitch cannot picture to himself an officer of gendarmes who is not "elegant," or a

¹ There is another romance, unfinished, of Tchernychevsky; "The Prologue to the Prologue." Certainly it is in no wise remarkable from the point of view of art; but it is very interesting, for it brings on the stage a large number of well-known politicians of the last reign, whom Tchernychevsky had frequent opportunities of observing.

Nihilist who is not a "monstrosity, weak and wicked." To him a Liberal is always a coward and a sot; the gentlemanly Conservative is resplendent with physical beauty, wit, strong will. The romances are always depicting the fatal consequences of Nihilism.¹ This tendency does injury even to men of great ability, such as Piesiemsky, and makes a poet of talent, Alexis Tolstoi, write absolutely bad verses against the Nihilists. The same feeling in matters of policy tells against Tourguéniev when he is drawing the "portrait of the generations." In "Fathers and Children" he is driven to make false generalisations. In "Virgin Soil" he describes things which he knows nothing about.

As a matter of course, this tendency-mania influenced much more injuriously the young men of an ability not yet mature, such as Pomialovsky, Rechetnikov. Risen from the lower classes, these romance writers were burning with indignation. They did not trouble themselves about art. They were only aflame with one desire—to show the full extent of the evil. Had they lived twenty years earlier, their intellect would without doubt have expanded under happier influences, and—who knows—they would perhaps have created some great work. It has turned out quite otherwise. The "Sketches of the Stock Exchange" of Pomialovsky were full of promise. The author died early, and could not but die. He led a terrible life.

¹ Mademoiselle Olga Smirnoff, in her article, calls this writer a novelist of ability. Perhaps he was by nature, but it has been killed by political bias. He has never written a good romance.

Shattered by the frightful struggle he had to carry on to rid himself of his surroundings, filled with fierce hatred of established order, he drank—drank pitilessly; was always in wretched holes, amongst the hardened in crime and in debauchery, partly to sound the depths of social ill, partly from a kind of perverse desire to show respectable society that he would not stay in its company, that he preferred to its hypocritical virtues the society of thieves and whores. Rechetnikov's life was equally short. "The Podlipovtzy," and "How is it Better?" despite the utter want of knowledge of art, showed the germs of considerable talent. These never developed. Son of a proletarian, a currier by trade, of most ordinary education, Rechetnikov came into literature with the one desire of showing how the poor suffered. It is a question even if he felt any wish at all to work with a view to artistic improvement. If he did, he would have been able to do nothing, crushed as he was by misery.

Art criticism was by no means in antagonism to the excessive propagation of these political ideas; on the contrary, it supported this with all its power. In point of fact, it had completely annihilated itself of its own accord, and turned itself into social criticism. Dobrolioubov, our latest literary critic, gave almost all his attention to politics in the domain of literary criticism. But Dobrolioubov as yet understood the demands of art, and yielded much to them. His successor, Pissarev—Dobrolioubov died early—went further. He simply declared war against art, against the æsthetic. He squandered most of his immense ability in bold paradox and in sophistry

that was destined to destroy the prestige of the great art-masters, such as Pouchkine. The direction of all this was to turn men of talent away from art and force them into useful action. Yet in Pissarev, as in many of his contemporaries, there was, irrespective of utilitarian calculations, something of greater power, an instinctive sentiment—the same sentiment that among the early Christians drove them to destroy the masterpieces of ancient art. All this art is the creature of sin; it is bought with the people's blood and tears. What groans were resounding throughout Russia that the upper classes might be able to hear the admirable harmony of Pouchkine's verse or of Glinka's music! The "gentleman" did penance for his historic sin against the people. He cried out with Niekrassov,—

“From the joyous and the babblers,
Bathing all their hands in blood,
Take me to the men that perish
For the mighty cause of love.”

From a feeling very natural in a convertite, he, like Pissarev, determined to hate all the good things sin had given him or his fathers. He did not deny that these high pleasures ought to be for men, but they ought to be for all. Let art develop, but only when all people are in a condition to enjoy it; and until then—down with all useless enjoyment! We have drunk the people's blood enough. It is time to serve them, to do only what is of use to them. One must study and teach, not enjoy one's self.

But could not art also be of use as a teacher?

"The repentant noble," Biélinsky, successor of Pouchkine, knew perfectly well that this was the case, but he did not want to think of it. He became full of suspicion of himself. As soon as it became a question of aught that could give him pleasure, he was ill at ease. Was he not being spoilt by his own desire for pleasure? No, he made up his mind, it was safer to reject this altogether; his conscience would be more at ease.

Thus the very energy of the movement of reform struck the strongest back-handed blows at art. Many men gave it up altogether. The reforms of Alexander II., limited as they were, yet made the want felt in Russia of a great number of cultured men able to devote themselves to social matters—arbitrators, justices of the peace, lawyers, members of the zemstvo, teachers, etc. This assuredly lessened to a great extent the contingent of the intellectual forces left for the work of literature. Finally, even in literature, the press recruited its forces from among those who until then had been devoted to art.

Such a condition of things would not, however, have had particularly hurtful results had it not been complicated with other circumstances as well. Moreover, we must not exaggerate the evil caused by the tendency-mania. After all, the respect for art *per se* had become so deeply rooted in Russia that no political tendencies could eradicate it. In the last thirty years we have really seen in Russia a series of men of great ability who would have done honour to any epoch: Léon Tolstoï, Dostoievsky, Niekrassov, Chtchédrine (Saltykov), Ostrovsky,

Tourguéniev,¹ Glièb Ouspenky, men of perverse but vast ability; a certain number of writers less powerful, but yet notable: Vsévolod Krestovsky (pseudonym),² Alexis Tolstoï, Kourotkhine; and among the quite young men, Cyanchine. This is not a bad list already. It would certainly be difficult to say that political feeling had exercised on any of these writers an irreparable influence. We may be sure that, without other harmful influences, Russian art, whilst yielding a certain amount of territory to political literature, would yet have gone on developing with sufficient force and fulness. Unhappily, the fatal lot of Russia struck blow on blow at art as well as at political literature, and at last has at the present time brought literature of every kind into an absolutely abnormal position.

The revolution expected by the intelligenzia was a fiasco. The reforming and reactionary forces of the country were so proportioned that they paralysed one the other, and all ended in a kind of marking time, a species of decomposition. Why is this, seeing that the reforming forces were much the more numerous? Because the reactionaries were organized, their forces condensed in the hands of a Government, and the reforming forces dispersed through the land and utterly disorganized. The

¹ Gontcharov, whose romance, "Oblomov," is one of the greatest works in Russian literature, can hardly be regarded as belonging to this epoch. His "Abyss" is not worth much, and really his literary career closed with "Oblomov."

² Besides Vsévolod Krestovsky (*nom de plume*), there is a real man of that name, who has made no small stir with his interminable "Haunts of St. Petersburg," but who is a writer of no worth.

moment when this state of things was clear on one side and the other, was the signal for the Government reaction, which, with certain intervals not worth mentioning, has lasted until now. This systematic reaction has not yet been able to create in the country any Conservative support on which the Government can rely. The Government is constantly obliged to keep itself on a war footing. On its side, the intelliguentia sees also that reforms are making almost no progress, and that in no case is anything lasting effected. Of course a revolutionary movement that goes beyond political reform, and is simply anti-governmental and insurrectionary, begins in the country.

Literature is then in a very unfortunate position. The press in the time preceding had been able to acquire an immense influence, and to create in Russia enormous forces. It had gained this end by the development and preaching of general principles. It spoke of God; but it dared not touch either priest or sacristan. It spoke of authority; but made no mention of the tzar, nor even of a policeman. It spoke of the laws of production and distribution, without caring to refer to the most unjust articles of the code. All this was well enough for a time, but it is evident that when the general bases of philosophy are sufficiently worked out, it is necessary to pass to practice, to deal with things that are going on to-day, to-morrow; in a word, there is the advent of the political press in the narrow sense of the phrase. But this advent was quite impossible. The severities of the censorship increased more and more. The press was of course obliged to be

silent, *i.e.* to perish. The best writers gave up writing. Assuredly there were in Russia attempts at a literature of politics every time this was possible. Of this kind are, *e.g.* the works of Golovatchev, Demert, Elisseeïev, Gradovsky, and others. But though they showed plenty of ability, these writers did not touch on the Government questions, *i.e.* on those that are actual in the strictest sense. The most typical publicist of this unhappy time is M. Mikhaïlovsky.¹ He is a man of great ability, backed by very remarkable learning and even depth of thought. He has only one fault: he lives at the present time. What is the use of his abilities at a time when a writer must treat of social and political questions, and at the same time must not utter one word that is sincere and clear on these questions? The seal of sadness, of depression, is at the outset upon the works of this journalist. He even gave up literature for some time, and was employed on a railway. This is but a typical example of the whole of the press. And its reputation is waning; the public are already treating it with contempt and jeering.

I know that the press has in part emigrated beyond the frontier. In the time before this, the journalists in Russia had so completely got the ear of the public that their influence became greater than that of Hertzen or of Bakounine, greater than that of the Emigration. Little by little the situation is changing. The last echoes from the journalists in Russia were the works of M. Flerovsky, and especially the "History Letters" of M. Piotre

¹ A contributor to the *Annals of the Fatherland*.

Lavrov, a work rather heavy but very profound. In this the author makes a study of the duties of man and of citizen, and tries to lay them down with the precision of a mathematical formula. There are very few books that can be compared with it for importance in their bearing on the development of the revolutionary party. But, as I have already said, these are the last successes of our journalists. Persecuted and beaten down, the press emigrates. The voice of Bakounine rings out again. Lavrov goes into exile. Abroad appear a series of journals, of pamphlets, of proclamations.¹ Then the printing press of the revolutionists, that had hitherto only been heard of at rare intervals beyond the frontiers, was established in the heart of Russia—secretly, of course. This literature by its influence brought about one of the most interesting phenomena of present-day Russia—the revolutionary movement. At the same time legalised literature remained

¹ Among the works published abroad may be noted the publications of Lavrov, "Forward," a summary, not issued at stated times (five large volumes), and a monthly journal with the same title. Among those of Bakounine, one has especially made a stir, "Authoritative Principles and Anarchy." *The Tocsin*, Tkatchev; *The Worker*; *The Commune*. Dragomanov has published a summary in several volumes, called in the Ukrainian language, "Gromada" (Commune). Let me further mention a constitutional journal, *The Free Word*, organ of the alliance of the zemstvos, which has been accused of some connection with the official world. As a matter of fact, it is published abroad. *The General Cause* (constitutional journal), *The Messenger of the People's Will* (revolutionary review), published as occasion serves. Add the publications of a socialist group, "The Deliverance of Labour," and those of M. Dragomanov. I do not mention a mass of pamphlets and of proclamations that form quite a literature in themselves.

without any influence on this movement, and did not even care to speak of it.

Of course the utter collapse of the press was under these conditions inevitable. Even if it does try to turn to account every moment of freedom, and say its say, these moments are rare and brief. Only journals can profit by them. That is why the daily press is developing so much more than heretofore. Everywhere it is getting the better of the review. But clever and pliant as the daily press is, it cannot do the impossible, and as a whole is of little use.

The literature "outside the law" cannot certainly fill up the gaps caused by the oppression of the Government. The free press, irrespective of its leanings, has connected with it men of very great ability in the literary sense; but the press of any country can only develop normally, and with any degree of fulness on its native soil, in permanent relation to the life of the people. Its place is not abroad. The revolutionary press within Russia, always crushed out by the police, has never been able to get beyond the issuing of leaflets. Amongst these, the journal *Narodnaia Volia* (The Will of the People) has made much stir; yet it has only been able to get out ten numbers in five years, not reckoning supplements. Under such conditions, one can compose good proclamations, but nothing more. Further, the average duration of the active life of a Russian revolutionist rarely exceeds six months to one year. This is clearly very little for ripening an incipient talent. To sum up, the press withers under men's eyes. As yet, even since the accession of Alexander III., it is not reduced to the piteous condition

it was in under Nicolas I.,—or to speak more accurately, it is not yet annihilated. It exists, but it is powerless. The political press has passed into the hands of the actual agents of the Government; who need not have any ability, and are not chosen, it is unnecessary to say, for their literary worth.¹ Still worse, the Government tolerates in the political press traders like Souvorine, who turn in the direction the wind blows. Finally, only men of no account are allowed in the opposition ; but as men of ability do not cease to go over to it, the opposition is as ceaselessly crushed by the Government of Alexander III. This was the case with the *Annals of the Fatherland*, *The Voice*, *The Moscow Telegraph*, and a large number of other periodicals.

What the position of the press is actually, the reader will be able to judge more exactly from the list of subjects that it was forbidden to discuss in 1881 and 1882.² The list of forbidden books is also very instructive. In 1884 the Government forbade the reading at the libraries of a long list of books, 125 in all. In this list figure all the best Russian reviews that have ever existed (except the *Messenger of Europe*) and the works of almost all our publicists.³ Of foreign writers, different works of Louis Blanc, Proudhon, Lassalle, Marx, have been

¹ There are many journals in Russia that are subsidised. Those most openly in this position are *The Moscow Gazette*, of Katkov, the *St. Petersburg Gazette*, *The Kievien*, etc. The last-named has now given up its subsidy.

² See Appendix C.

³ Blagoviestchensky, Bajine, Dobrolioubov, Joukovsky (Julian), Zassodimsky, Zlatovratsky, Mirtov Mikhaïlov (Cheller), Mikhaïlovsky, Pissarev, Pomialovsky, Priklonsky, Flerovsky.

forbidden. Even Sudre's book, "Communism," was forbidden. Now, this writer makes war on Communism. What does it matter? Russian governors are so highly educated that they do not even know what the books they are forbidding contain. Next, it is the turn of the works of Agassiz, Quetelet, Elisée Reclus' geography, Spencer's writings, and even Adam Smith's. It is true that Adam Smith was restored later on, so I will not insist upon him. The reader sees now the position of Russian literature under this enlightened despotism, as they sometimes call the Russian monarchy in Europe.

To a certain extent the literature of art, as formerly, takes the place of a political literature. Let me note in this connection that the satire best holds its own. This is a very characteristic fact. Satire has been in existence in Russia from the most remote times, and has become the national form of art-work more than the social romance. The earliest works of any importance in Russian literature took on the satirical form: Kantemir's satires, Von-Vizine's comedies, Krylov's writings. Derjavine himself sometimes inclined to satire: then come Griboëdov (Too much Intellect means Unhappiness) and Gogol. In our own times there are Niekassov (poetry), Ostrowski (comedies), Chtchédrine (Saltykov), without reckoning a dozen or so of men of ability not so great as these, but yet very marked,—as Kourotchkine, Dobrolioubov, Minaïev, etc. As soon as existence is possible to the press, satirical journals rise instantly, and generally they are written with ability. Of this type were the journals of Novikov and Krylov. In the reign of Alexander II., there

was the *Svistok* (Whistle) of Dobrolioubov, of sparkling wit, the terror of the reactionaries; then the *Iskra* (Spark) of Kourotkhine, the best of our caricature journals. At the beginning of the reign of Alexander III., when the Government was not yet strong enough to hamper the press too closely, the best political journal of the time (*The Moscow Telegraph*) published a satirical column, the very clever articles in which were attributed to Minaïev. Further, satirical supplements were in abundance among us, after the style of the *Svistok*. The advent of satire is the mark of an epoch in which the discordance between the ideal conceptions of society and reality is patent. A certain amount of idealism is indispensable to satire, since it is by comparison with the ideal that actual life can be seen to be ridiculous or vicious. The multiplicity and depth of Russian satire are an indication of the vast ideal of the intelliguentia. Their satire summons before its tribunal the whole social order. If Gogol and Griboïédov keep to the domain of bureaucracy and nobility, the satires of the present time penetrate more deeply into the life of the country.

Ostrovsky, the most important of our dramatic writers after Gogol, has his speciality; he writes comedies on the life of our *bourgeoisie*. Several types, his creations, are as immortal as those of Griboïédov and Gogol. But Russia owes to Chtchédrine (Saltykov) the best of its satires. A writer of extraordinary fertility and universality, he paints in his satires every phase of real life. His ingenuity is astounding; it is a Fortunatus' purse of pleasure and railing,—now gay, now tremendous. He

vanquishes by his cleverness even those whom he chastises. At times even the censorship will not raise its hand against Chtchédrine, and at moments when the press is muzzled, he lays his finger upon the most malignant ulcer of society. He drags on to the stage the founders of the Holy League, brands the system of spying, lays bare all the vulgarity of the Government reaction. Of course a great many of his writings are proscribed ; but he knows how to avoid difficulties. He has even created a language of his own, the language of the serfs, as he calls it ; a language of exceeding flexibility, which cuts like a razor and yet gives the adversary no chance of picking a quarrel with it. But for this thoroughly Russian language the English public could form some idea of Chtchédrine from Paul Louis Courier. Their methods have many characteristics in common. If in style Paul Louis is far above Chtchédrine, on the other hand he is inferior to him as an artist. Chtchédrine is in the foremost rank as artist ; he has created scores of types, and has engraved them with astounding profundity and clearness. Let me mention the types of our incipient *bourgeoisie* (Koloupaëv and others), several of our bureaucracy, Ioudouchka, in the romance "The Messrs. Golovlev." This last is a miser of a quite special type, who should be one of the collection to which Molière, Balzac, Gogol have contributed.

In studying Russian satire, we cannot pass over the general tone of confidence in itself. By preference it keeps to angry sarcasm, and very rarely allows itself to be tempted to anathemas of despair,

The satire of the celebrated Niekrrassov is the most sombre. His genius, evolved during the later years of serfdom, always bore the sad impress of this. If it is not in despair, it is at least in desolation.

“Be still, O Muse of vengeance and of grief !
I will not trouble more the sleep of men.
Have you and I not cursed enough ?”

cries the poet. Then he goes on :

“What is the good of writing or of speech ?
You will not make one Russian fool the less ;
And wise men you will sadden.”

Niekrrassov, noble by birth, is especially the poet of the people's woes. He has drawn many a poignant picture of the people's life ; he has created many a type cast in bronze. The finest of these are the repentant koulak, Vlas, and the bourlaks (bargemen). But he scarcely ever paints a picture of severity ; yet the poet does see such pictures. His “Peasant Children” is a delightful piece, full of warmth and colour ; and there is in his writings one scene of happy peasant life, a calm idyll whose charm it is difficult to interpret except in a quite literal version. Where do you think this scene is enacted ? In a dream. It is the dream of a peasant widow freezing to death in the forest,¹ whither she has gone to cut wood that she may warm her children perishing with cold and hunger. All of Niekrrassov is in this poem. Nevertheless cursing is the exception in Russian satire, which is always, as it were, astonished that such and such absurd evil

¹ He that dies of cold falls asleep, and has, they say, pleasant dreams.

can exist, and cannot believe that this or that wrong has not passed away. At the present time, in this present reign of Alexander III., Chtchédrine has uttered a cry of despair. It is a magnificent satire —“The Triumphant Pig.” “Until now,” says the satirist, “I was wont to bear all ills with the dull unction, ‘If God doesn’t allow it, the pig won’t eat us’ (Russian proverb).” Now for the first time he is alarmed. He cries out: “The pig will eat us, he will eat us!” But do not make too much of this terror. See how this man, frightened out of his wits, treats the pig (the triumphant reaction), and you will be convinced that this despair is “not of the right colour.”

Eighteen months ago a photograph went the round of Russia, where, of course, it was forbidden. It may be taken as emblematic of Russian satire. It is a forest dark and pathless, on which the shadows of night are falling. A terrified man is gliding among the trees, book in hand. It is Chtchédrine. Face and figure are admirably caught. He seems saddened, afraid. Monsters are swarming around him; a serpent is striking at him; the “triumphant pig,” that has just been scarified by his satire, is threatening him with its tusks and is about to seize him by the leg, as it drags after it a huge policeman’s sword, buckled by a belt round its belly. Two will o’ the wisps are shining among the trees. They are the eyes of the spies with which the country is filled. In the background, within the darkness of the night, is seen the shadow of a policeman with shining eyes. Amidst all these monsters, the satirist glides timidly along. But whither? Ah! he sees an

outlet. This forest, with its monsters, may, in truth, be terrifying; but through a glade the light is stealing, and it falls on a plain beyond. The first ray of the rising sun lights up the face of a peasant. Towards this shining sun of the future, that is scattering and will scatter the shadows and the horrors of night, the satirist is travelling. The picture bears this inscription :

“The way is hard, but dawn is near.”

Is this dawn near? Meantime, the way of literature is terribly hard. So hard that political literature, worn out, no longer marches; she drags her slow length along. Satire holds out still, but always in the person of Chtchédrine alone. The social romance has suffered yet more. I said above that the present position of art literature is infinitely more threatening to it than the political complications of 1860. That which is crushing the press is crushing also the literature of art.

Censorship in Russia has almost always been excessively severe and stupid, but it has never exercised so fatal an influence on the literature of art as at the present time. The privileges of art are abolished. It is no longer despised; it is dreaded. It has almost less of liberty than the press. But, thanks to the development of the revolutionary movement, the writer who can represent life as it is, touches more and more, even in spite of himself, on the thorny questions. A work, be it poem or romance, is only great if it reproduces the social type. At the present moment, so important is the revolutionary type in Russia, that

her society cannot be depicted without touching, in some way or other, on revolutionists. Now this, with the censorship, is quite impossible. Poetry and romance are thus cut off at the root. It cannot be said that the creative talent is exterminated in Russia; yet, if we do find any traces of poetic attempts, it is in the revolutionary publications. An instance is the "Last Confessions," in No. 1 of *The Will of the People*. It is a scene of real beauty, powerful in conception. The author brings on the stage two men of antagonistic philosophies—the one a priest, honest, intelligent, convinced; the other, a revolutionist condemned to death for an attempted assassination.

"You are come to hear my confession," says the latter to the pope. "I do not believe in your God; but if you will have it, listen!"

"Pardon me, O God! that I have loved with my whole heart, as brothers, the poor and needy."

"Pardon me, that I have not believed the eternal well-being of man a fable never to 'come true.'

"Pardon me, that I have worked for that well-being, not with smooth-tongued talk alone, but with all my being—my mind, my heart, my hands."

"Pardon me, that I have executed assassins for their murders."

"Pardon me, who, born a slave among slaves, die now among slaves a free man."

The meeting of these two types of men, drawn by a man of genius, writing genuine Russian, might have been the theme of a great poem.

The like ability is shown in the "Songs of the Rising Generation," recently published in the *Mes-*

senger of the Will of the People. Once more we see in these germs that, under favourable conditions, might have ripened into a great poem. But are revolutionary journals, in truth, an asylum that is favourable for art? They have their aim, their ends—those of their party, and these weigh on the poet like a second censorship. As to such literature as is legalised, in this the poet can but be silent. And this is why we have actually plenty of young men of ability, like Minsky, Martov, Iakoubovitch, and no poetry. The last of the Mohicans of the poetry of the past, such as A. Tolstoï, Maïkov, Polonsky, have died out, or are dying out, far from the life of to-day, which they do not understand and from which they derive no inspiration.

To their cry the Muse makes answer :

“O poet, call me not thy Muse!
For as this day of pain draws in,
I cannot sing for weariness.
All is forgotten, I know not
The song of rose or babbling stream,
Nor song of nightingale to rose.
I know not even if he sings.”

This perplexity, face to face with life, overwhelms art perhaps more than even the censorship of it. Romance beneath this burden of actuality grows weak, has become well-nigh impossible. Somebody asked a Russian artist, “Why don’t you write a great romance?” “Because,” was the answer, “a romance without revolutionists would be in Russia a lie.” And this is true. It is not, of course, here a question of revolutionists only, but of political complications in general. The romance is a com-

plete picture of life; as consequence, if it is faithful to the reality, it must come into collision with these complications. The only way to avoid these collisions is to falsify reality, *i.e.* to confine one's self to outlines, sketches, isolated facts. Thus the romance with us is replaced by the tale. The average dimensions of works of art are extremely limited. The average length of a tale by Ouspensky is thirty pages. In the small volume of Garchine's works before me there are eight tales in 207 pages. And, to tell truth, if of late years one hears of the publication of a romance of any size, one may be sure beforehand that it will be commonplace. Our writers even feel that it is an insult to suggest to them the writing one. "Wait a while," said one of them, with a bitter smile, "until my children have grown up. I shall want a great deal of money for their education. Well, then I will write you a romance—in three volumes," he added bitterly. "At present, thank God! I am not reduced to that."

To these difficulties are added those that are the result of Russian social life. To thrive, even to exist in some measure, the romance needs conditions of social life that are defined, social types clearly marked. In the Russia of to-day, wherever you turn, struggle, fermentation are, and the struggle is not always very definite. It is not of the kind that the organism maintains against a fever, against typhus, or any other well-marked disease. More often it is a sort of febrile condition, as to which the ablest physician cannot be sure whether he has to do with an ordinary fever or with typhus. The artist

is in the same perplexity face to face with the phenomena of our daily life. Where is to be found the true type that sums up this or that social fact, so complex, entangled, confused? For the most part the artist is under an interdict. He finds that he is obliged to begin a study of life detailed, minute. The more familiar he becomes with it, the more evident becomes its complexity. He is disturbed, in conflict with the same febrile unrest that disturbs life. He feels that he cannot discover the keynote of life, and he begins to be afraid. This feeling of amazement, in face of the complexity of existence, sometimes hurls him right into mysticism, as in the cases of Dostoievsky and Tolstoi. This mystic condition of mind is very evident in Russian literature. The writer feels convinced that he does not understand life, that in it something unknown and of vast power plays a part, and that he cannot grasp this vast unknown. To one, this "I know not what" presents itself in supernatural guise; to another, it is the revolution; to a third, it is some inconceivable reaction on the part of the people. In the presence of this vast unknown, the realist school of to-day has decided, almost in so many words, not to attempt the representation of life as a whole, in its totality. It gives itself up to study and to the production of studies and studies only, without making a single great picture. A whole series of artists are working in this way: Ouspensky, Zlatovratsky, Ertel, Naoumov, and especially the young writers, Karonine, Korolenko, Garchine, and the rest. Their attention is, above all, devoted to studying the people.

Glièb Ouspensky holds the first place in this school of modern naturalism. Garchine hardly belongs to it. Garchine is absolutely original in our literature. Still very young, already showing many symptoms of mental aberration, a writer of immense ability, and with a nervous system morbidly impressionable, he is as one overwhelmed by the life of his time. He is struggling with all his soul after I know not what ideal of the beautiful and the good ; but he is full of despair.

One of his best tales is "Attalea Princeps," the name of a species of palm. A tree of tropical climes, transported to an orangery in St. Petersburg, longs for the clear air and burning sun of its home. It makes up its mind to see them at all costs. It begins to grow and grow, that it may burst the orangery roof and regain its liberty. At last the longed-for moment has come. The panes overhead are breaking under the pressure of the fertile trunk ; the palm-tree, curved and bent, straightens itself into the free air. And then ? It is the grey sky of St. Petersburg ; the sun is hidden by the clouds ; the cold wind is blowing over the damp snow, and freezes this poor child of the south. Has it struggled so hard to look on this grey sky and snow ? Lo, the owner of the orangery ! He orders the tree to be cut down.

Garchine is embodied in this tale. He sees no other outlet than this for all that is beautiful and peaceful. He does not seek to get anything out of life. He writes simply because he cannot help it, because he must paint pictures. But there is no object in doing it. It may be that Garchine, if he

does not become altogether mad, or if he does not follow Tolstoï into some religious body in search of a mystical repose for his sick soul,—it may be that Garchine will create some great work. But as he is at present, it is his doom to be reduced to creating a few small episodes, fugitive as the beauty he has found in life.

I have said that the naturalist school, named realist about 1860, and even then comprising certain men of notable ability, such as Rechetnikov and Pomialovsky, has not as yet made itself mistress of Russian life. It is always studying. From this point of view Glièb Ouspensky's works will always remain the most valuable historical monument. A writer of extraordinary gifts and fertility, Ouspensky has written no less than ten or a dozen volumes in French : they are all sketches, scenes. The fidelity and accuracy of their rendering are at times wonderful. Any other writer, with his immense mass of materials, would long ere this have written several romances. Ouspensky is more exacting for himself and for art. He continues still to write sketches only. Our celebrated painter, Ivanov, does the same with his "Christ's Advent ;" he has been at work at this picture for twenty years. Perhaps one of these days Ouspensky will produce some great work. Perhaps he will never be strong enough to pass from study to creation. Yet his studies will remain for ever the most perfect products of the literature of our time. They are sketches worth more to the lover of art than the great pictures of the other writers.

This then is the actual position of Russian litera-

ture, and from this position it will only pass when the social fermentation now going on ends in a decisive movement of the life of the people in one direction or the other.



BOOK VII.

POLITICAL RUSSIA.

BOOK VII.

CHAP. I. The Russian administration.—Medical administration.—The army.—The Skariatine trial ; its revelations.—Local administration ; its abuses.

CHAP. II. Political parties : Reactionary, Liberal, Revolutionary.—The mistakes of the Liberals and the Revolutionists.—Reaction.—The revolutionary staff.—Its youth among the people.—Trials and persecutions.—Terrorist movement.—Conspiracies.—Propaganda among the army.

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CHAPTER I.

The Russian administration.—Medical administration.—The army.—The Skariatine trial ; its revelations.—Local administration ; its abuses.

IN the popular Russian tales we often meet with a mythical being—*baba iaga*—*Kostianaïa noga* (the old witch with the club foot). The dwelling of this old witch is generally represented as a small hut so wretchedly dilapidated that it ought to have tumbled down long ago, and only stands up because it does not know on which side to fall. This picture of the fancy rises unbidden into the mind when one thinks of the political constitution of Russia to-day. By what does it hold together ?

Between the historic monarchy and the mass of the people there is a profound contradiction, that a misunderstanding of centuries alone conceals. The educated class is openly hostile as much to the principle of irresponsible and absolute authority, as to its police and bureaucratic forms. The classes in power exact from the monarchy more protection than they can give it. Without any doubt there are very few guarantees for the political tranquillity of the country and for the lasting of the existing order of things.

At first sight, it may seem that an absolute monarchy, holding in its hands unlimited power and supported by the trust without reservations of the people, has full scope, if it has the least desire to act really in the interests of the people, for cutting all the Gordian knots of Russian internal policy. The upper classes would be, whether they liked it or not, compelled to submit and be contented with the dole, pitiable as it might be, that people and tsar would throw them as indemnification for the privileges of which they would be deprived.

There are believers in this dream in Russia; some trembling at such a fate, others founding on it all their hopes. Even recently, when the Emperor Alexander III. was not yet definitely pledged to political reaction, many people hoped to induce him to play the part of the revolutionary dictator for the people, and were promising to Russia a development of unheard-of swiftness, before which the world should recoil in wonder, and to the emperor an immortal glory, by the side of which that of Peter the Great should be as dust.

But in sociology, as in biology, there are certain limits to the variability of the type, that cannot be transcended by the organism; and in the Russian historical monarchy the type is very stable, and not at all plastic. In order to solve the new problems that the life of the State propounded as it became more complex, the Russian Tzars tried times and again to reform the mechanism of the State. All these modifications, all these ameliorations, effected no alteration in the type; on the contrary, they make it more and more marked. The power of the

bureaux and centralization increased more and more. In this sense the Russia of the imperial time leaves Muscovite Russia far in the rear, and Russia of to-day outstrips that of all precedent epochs. Government and bureaucratic authority may be more gentle, thanks to gentler manners, but it invests more and more straitly and thoroughly the life of the country. The tchinovnik becomes all powerful;

“ For he is everywhere, knows all, sees all,
And pokes his nose in everything.”

And yet the administrative machine is becoming more vast, more complex. It is growing more and more difficult to exercise a control over it on the basis of the personal authority of the emperor, who, surrounded on all sides by the bureaucracy, only sees and hears that which it pleases them he should see and hear. The Emperor Nicolas used to say that Russia was governed by the stolonatchalniks (chiefs of bureaux). The phrase is full of meaning. Despotism in Russia is stifling from plethora. In point of fact, despotism is limited on all sides. Only the limitation is not at the hands of the country, but at those of the tchinovnitchestvo (bureaucracy), who in a sense draw up the laws, carry them out, or see that they are regularly carried out.

It would be useless to point out the frightful abuses, the despotism, resulting from such a state of affairs. Bureaucratic centralization is turned into an oligarchy of tchinovniks. The various offices of Government become, in fact, independent. The chiefs of departments act often arbitrarily, on their

own initiative, and independently of their respective chiefs. In many cases the country is thankful for this despotism, for at times the despotism of the local authorities alone mitigates and makes bearable the measures decreed by Government. Thus, in a comedy of Ostrowsky, a newly-fledged prefect asks the people under his jurisdiction, who are come to bid him welcome : "How do you wish me to treat you? According to the laws? . . . But the laws are numerous," he adds in a significant tone. "H'm! Show them the laws." His secretary brings in an enormous pile of volumes. The inhabitants in alarm : "No, no, father! Why according to the laws? We get on better without them."¹

Coming back to real life, a large number of facts might be quoted that bear witness to the benefits which at times accrue to Russia from this arbitrary conduct of departments and of chiefs. How often do we come across people who, like the statistician Arseniev, have been preserved for Russian science by individual despotism, and rescued from the fate for which general despotism had marked them out! In Russia it is quite possible to meet a prefect who, whilst the Government policy aims at destroying the agrarian commune, will say, when he is talking privately with his friends, "Don't think I have taken this place from ambition. I have become a prefect only to maintain and develop the *mir*." The reader will understand that I cannot give names, but the fact is well known. If the beautiful land of the Amour is not taken from Russia, and if one of these days it becomes the basis of the prosperity of Siberia

¹ I am here quoting from memory.

and the key to Russian power in the Pacific, a grateful posterity will remember Russia owes the possession of this land to the arbitrary action of Count Mouraviev, and will regret that his action was hampered in all directions by the Government. It is almost superfluous to say that this same despotism is a source of innumerable abuses, and gives the inhabitants up to the most tyrannical rule. The present unhappy time is especially rich in facts that substantiate this. The scandal of the trial of the doctor in medicine Bouche, in 1883, showed the almost incredible influence of "tips" in the medical department. The head of this, Doctor Bouche, needing doubtless a great deal of money—he had two families, his wife's and his mistress's—levied a regular tax on all doctors in quest of appointments. His tips were paid openly, at a fixed rate. The system was carried on for many years. Nor was this all. In the course of his trial it was proved that in other departments the same kind of thing occurred. The Government was afraid of lifting the curtain any higher, and did not enter upon any further prosecutions.

The abuses that go on in the military commissariat are known to every one, and have been proved in a great many trials. In the last war with Turkey, the Russian army was, as people said at the time, between two fires : in front of it the Turks, behind it the commissariat. In 1878 I met, at Vladikavkaz, a commissary who, strange to say, was an honest man. One day this commissary comes full of indignation to a friend's, whose acquaintance I had just made. There he tells of the cheating of a

contractor, who had delivered to him a supply of oats so damaged that the stink of them made it unpleasant to come near the store-house. "Ah! young man," said he to me, "you only dream of all sorts of constitutions; you would really be of more use if you accepted some office, and at all events lessened the number of these impudent swindles. Can any horse eat such stuff as this?" And he opened his handkerchief and showed me a sample of the oats. It really was something beyond imagination—mere dirt. A few oat grains mixed with it were already beginning to germinate; the rest were all rotten. "But is it possible that you put up with such dirty tricks?" "Of course not. But these cheats are always on the look-out to take advantage of the slightest negligence, and supply provisions that are worth nothing. I have at once telegraphed to Tiflis." Tiflis was the capital of the namiestnik (lieutenant),¹ the Tzar's brother, and the administrative capital of the Caucasus. Several days later I learned that the only answer the commissary had was this laconic order from his chief: "Accept the oats at once." I do not know if after this he changed his opinion as to my dreams of constitutions. I never saw him again.

It is a question whether the large number of facts of this kind one meets at every turn in Russia can be explained by the perversity of the administration alone. I am inclined to think that, placed in the same conditions, *i.e.*, with power to do just as they like, the administration of any other country would not be any better. In many cases they would be

¹ There is no lieutenantship now.

worse, and in most cases they would not be as considerate. The cause of the evil is not in the persons, but in a defective organization, unlimited power, absence of all control. Men are everywhere pretty much the same; but the impotence of the institutions that are supposed to have the direction of affairs, and the impossibility of getting them under effective control, place the people of Russia under a kind of feudal yoke, at times laughable, at times cruel. From the Russian journals I take the first facts I come across as to this administrative tyranny. The prefect of the Perm government dies. The head of the police of the town of Perm takes upon himself thereon to order the population into mourning. He stops a *fête* that was to have been held in the public garden, forbids a *soirée* at the commercial club, regardless of the protests of the public, who, having paid for their tickets, do not so much as have their money returned to them.

This case is a ridiculous one. Here is one that is by no means laughable. In 1880-81, the thefts at the Kharkov railway-station became more and more numerous, and assumed at last the character of an epidemic. It was soon discovered that they were the work of a regularly organized band with at its head—the police! The matter came before the courts, and in the course of the trial it was proved that Filipov, the commissary of police, took part directly in the thefts, and levied a fixed tax of 15 per cent. on the results of them. In return he showed special favour to the association. Neither gendarmes nor police ever interfered with the thieves, or, when it was impossible not to interfere, released them at

once. Further, the gendarmes received a fixed percentage, and the police did their best to bring about the dismissal of all the guards who were in the way of the thieves, and to secure the engagement of the latter in their place, that they might rob passengers at their ease. In a word, the intimate relations between the police and the thieves were complete. "Comrades, how is it you are so lazy?" said the sergeant, Rossolovsky, reproachfully to the thieves when they brought him a poor lot of plunder. So powerful was the organization of this band of policemen and thieves, that at the outset of the prosecution, the *juge d'instruction* was for a long while unable to find out anything. The thefts were committed under people's eyes, and yet the thieves remained invisible. The *juge d'instruction* only got hold of them after he had, unknown to the official police, organized his own, made up of employés placed in charge of the luggage. Once, with the intention of catching the thieves in the act, the *juge d'instruction*, having learned that they had a rendezvous at the station, went at once and alone to Korovine, the head of the police, begging him to say nothing to any of his subordinates. All the same, the thieves were warned in time. I do not wish to accuse Korovine; but the mere facts that this strange incident has never been explained, and that Korovine calmly remained head of the police in Kharkov, are very characteristic of Russian administration. Let us note yet one more important point. M. Rossolovsky, himself a member of the band (this was proved as result of the judicial inquiry), but who had quarrelled with Filipov and

denounced him, escaped prosecution, and was indeed rewarded by promotion to a higher position. Still, to keep up appearances, he was shifted from his original berth, and named adjunct to the commissary at Koursk.

It will be seen how difficult it is for a Russian citizen to feel easy as to the safety of his person and property under the guardianship of such protectors as this.

Here again is a little picture of manners that was also unveiled by a judicial inquiry. In Russia there is a small town called Voltchansk. Two years ago the post of "ispravnik" in it was held by a certain Zograf. According to the testimony of witnesses, he was a good-enough sort of man; but the *rôle* of petty king, with full power to commit all kinds of infamies, is more dangerous than all personal defects. In this same town of Voltchansk lived one Ponomarev, who kept a restaurant. His wife, Ouliana, a very pretty woman, was not unpleasing to the ispravnik, and was not too cruel to him. For some time our two turtle-doves were content with meeting at an aunt's. Later, they wanted to be more free, and the ispravnik made up his mind to get rid of the husband. "Russia has laws of such a kind," said Zograf to Ouliana, "that there is no one you can't get rid of." Ouliana left her husband. The ispravnik sent his man to bring away the woman's things. They carried off, without any ceremony, everything they had been told to, and added certain things that by rights belonged to Ponomarev. As to the latter, the ispravnik, to make assurance doubly sure, had him arrested and thrown into prison. The

justice of the peace, angry at this abuse of power, intervened ; the unlucky spouse was set at liberty. The ispravnik attacked from another side. He got a number of people to denounce Ponomarev as "evil-disposed," and upon this denunciation was for transporting him. Thereupon, Ouliana, taking pity no doubt at last on her husband, left the ispravnik and made it up with Ponomarev. Zograf, desperate, beside himself with rage, called together the police, went to the shop, arrested the two of them and imprisoned them, this time both together, in the district of Starobielsk. Of course the Ponomarevs were completely ruined. Their business never recovered itself, and all their belongings were in part lost, in part stolen. Ouliana paid dearly for her little romance.

Let us now turn to the army, the chief object of Government solicitude.

On May 3, 1882, the military surgeon, Skariatine, had orders to go to Bobrouïsk, to take the post of surgeon in the military hospital of that town. He did not go, and with his written refusal he sent a report, in which he stated that he left the service because, in the existing state of affairs, the position of a medical man in the department of the ministry of war was incompatible with honour and with the oath he had taken. Skariatine was put on his trial for such flagrant disobedience. His trial, on March 11th, 1883, revealed so many horrible things that the publication of any account of it was forbidden. In our judicial press only slight hints appeared on the matter. I have in my hands, however, a copy of the report of the sittings of the

tribunal. Dr. Skariatine is no revolutionist. He is simply an honest man. For a long time he had known of the ignominies of governmental Russia. In the Turko-Russian war, the Government, face to face with the necessity of fighting the epidemic of typhus that was decimating the army, appealed to the medical students. Skariatine, then a student in the Academy of Medicine at St. Petersburg, was among the number of generous youths that answered this appeal. Then for the first time he had the opportunity of appreciating the position of the Russian soldier, and he was struck with that which he saw. He saw, in his own words, such utter contempt for the life and personality of man, and such thieving as he had never even thought possible. At Odessa he was present at the embarkation of the soldiers. The sea was very rough, and the vessel that carried the soldiers was almost flat-decked and had not even a handrail. Skariatine, with one of his comrades, spoke to the harbour-master and asked him not to crowd the soldiers together so near the vessel's edge, as they might with the rolling of the ship fall into the water. "And a good job too, was the answer. We have quite enough of this cattle. They are not horses; we do have to keep account of them."

What the young doctor saw in the hospitals was even worse; there the soldiers were literally pillaged as by bandits. The regulations were, that patients must leave their money in the hands of the administration of the lazaretto. As a rule, the soldiers never got it again. Then there were any amount of protests. One day Skariatine tried in-

terferring on behalf of a soldier, who, at the impossibility of getting back his last 7 roubles, could not keep back his tears. "It's no business of yours," they said to him. As he went from one hospital to another, Skariatine was able to convince himself that this state of things was general. Then the soldiers tried to find people in whose hands their money might be safe from these thieves. But the latter did not give up their prey easily. Thus, *e.g.*, the soldiers had special confidence in one of the sisters of charity, named Féodorov. The inspector of the hospital, learning one day that a soldier had entrusted his money to her, did not even think it worth while to hide his displeasure, but apostrophized the sister of charity in Billingsgate. They stole openly, without any attempt at concealment. One of the witnesses, the officer Sytchevsky, had also presented a report about two of his soldiers who had been robbed; but the report, although most earnestly pressed, remained without any result. Once, Skariatine complained to M. Prissielkov, chief inspector of the sanitary service, who had the highest reputation as an honest man. He, at the first impulse, seized a pencil to make a note of the name of the person guilty of theft; but as soon as he heard it the pencil fell from his hand. "Malinine? Oh! he's too well known. Nothing can be done with a man in his position. . . . You can't catch men like him with their hands in their pocket." What is the meaning of this last phrase? I do not exactly understand. Doubtless Malinine had powerful friends.

It is superfluous to say that robberies from the

public funds go on even more openly. "I thought then," said Skariatine at the trial, "that in our army in Turkey all the dregs of our society were gathered together. I said to myself—what is possible in Turkey is impossible in Russia. That is why, despite my bitter experience, I entered anew (*i.e.*, after I had finished my studies) into the service of the ministry of war, with the view of being, according to my power, of use to the soldiers. But I was cruelly mistaken; the same dregs of society I had seen scheming in Turkey, were scheming with the same impunity here."

Skariatine entered the service as second surgeon in the 9th Uhlans,¹ and set to work energetically. A whole series of depositions are in existence to prove that the young doctor gave himself up wholly to his new duties. He visited no one, took no amusement, stayed all day and far into the night in the hospital, purchased out of his own pocket the medicines the patients needed. Moreover he showed the same solicitude for the sick in the town, so that the representatives of Loubay gave him, as a mark of gratitude, a silver album, with the inscription, "To the physician and the man." But, at every turn, experience showed Skariatine that to be useful to the soldiers was very difficult. In the hospital he saw the most shameless speculations in human life. There were two divisions in the hospital: the hospital proper, for serious illnesses, and the ambulance for those of less importance. In the latter, most of the patients only stay a very short time. A

¹ Now that the Uhlan regiments have been disbanded, it is known as the 26th Dragoons of Bouge.

regular account is kept at the hospital only ; as to the ambulance, there is no sort of account of the patients, who only come there just to see the doctors. By this circumstance the military administration and the doctors profit. The heads of the regiment know the accounts record the minimum number of patients ; that is a proof that the soldiers are well looked after. Then, not to spoil the accounts (the technical expression), men suffering from the severest diseases are sent to the ambulance as affected with slight disorders. In August, 1881, when typhus was beginning to rage in the regiment, thirty men were crowded together in the ambulance, a prey to delirium—suffering from diarrhoea. Yet the ambulance, according to regulations, gave out no more food than the customary soldiers' rations, and found for the sick men none of the comforts absolutely necessary for them. All this time half the beds in the hospital proper were empty. And all this that the accounts might look pretty. Skariatine, taking advantage of the absence of the head physician, moved the worst cases to the hospital. He was reprimanded on account of the unheard-of number of patients.

If the doctors go on like this, the military administration observes still less ceremony with the soldiers. Thus, *e.g.*, at a review by the general of brigade, the soldier Pietrenko was so ill in the ambulance that he ought to have been shifted to the hospital, and that he was discharged from the service later on as invalided. The commander of the squadron abused this unfortunate for daring to lie down in the ambulance (in the ambulance a

patient must not dare to be seriously ill). He ordered him to present himself at the squadron for punishment, and such punishment! Nothing but the firmness of the medical man prevented this chastisement of a sick man. This all occurred almost under the eyes of the general of brigade, who all the time was occupied in receiving complaints. And this is the care their superiors have for the soldiers' health.

All through the two years that Skariatine passed in the service, the pharmacy of the regiment was without any drugs. An application for drugs ran the risk of causing displeasure at the general dépôt (where the same sort of thieving was going on, and the head physician, in order to avoid disagreeables, preferred keeping silence). Then, for the purchase of drugs, only the sums apportioned to the hospital from the purse of the regiment were used. And the commander of the regiment only allowed 100 roubles a year to be taken from this, a sum that was to suffice for the food of the patients (twenty-four beds), for drugs, for repairs in the hospital. The reason for this parsimony was the poverty of the regiment, and the poverty of the regiment was due to the fact that all the savings (70,000 to 80,000 roubles) had been stolen by the chiefs. Convinced that to treat patients under these circumstances was impossible, Skariatine gave all his attention to preventive hygiène. "And here it was," he said to the tribunal, "that I came into collision with the doings of the ministry of war."

Skariatine's conflicts with the higher departments had, as prime cause, the cruel beatings of the sol-

diers. Corporal punishment has been long abolished by law. Nevertheless the cases of illness due to blows that had been received were common in the regiment. This fact was proved at the trial by the deposition of many witnesses. The trumpeter Temvrioukov, as punishment for his slow progress in music, was knocked down by the leader of the orchestra with blows of the trumpet on the nose and mouth. The soldier, covered with blood, went to the hospital, where the doctor kept him for three days. Another crime! How dare he go to the hospital? As soon as he came out of the hospital, the colonel ordered him, as punishment, to the guard-room for ten days. Another trumpeter, Iarko, paid yet more dearly, and, as it would appear, from no fault of his. The music-master in a temper struck Jarko's ear with his trumpet with such force that the blood spurted from the other ear. The soldier was obliged to stop in hospital a whole month. A young soldier, Gostinsky, was so knocked about by blows "in the muzzle" from an under officer, that he only just escaped inflammation of the brain. A long time after even, he suffered from atorrhœa. After he had been in hospital many months, Gostinsky was sent home as incapable of service. The soldier Zakhartchenko received a similar blow for having presented arms at four paces off instead of twenty. The soldier Lioubezko, in consequence of blows in the face and on the side of the head, was unconscious in the hospital. The doctors were afraid of a rupture of the drum. The patient was finally deaf in one ear. The soldier Korneienko was beaten by the officer Goriaysky until the blood spurted from

his mouth. This did not appease the officer's anger, and with his musket he forced the soldier to run in front of him. The soldier ran along for two hours, swallowing his blood, until he fell down. Many persons have seen in the hospital a glass full of Korneienko's blood that escaped at his death, and was preserved. The soldier Krakh was beaten by his colonel because he did not know how to cure his horse. "He beat him for several days (deposition of the officer Jikharev), and many times a day. He would go and rest in his tent, then come back and begin beating him anew." Enough of examples; and yet how many have I omitted! The colonel even threatened to give the assistant surgeon, Svertchevsky, ex-medical student, five hundred blows with a stick.

Sometimes these infamies provoked protests from persons not connected with the army; *e.g.*, a crowd once rescued a soldier from the hands of the cornet Arakine, who was beating him cruelly. On another occasion, the indignation of the public was aroused against the major Filomonov, who horsewhipped the recruits at drill.

These cruel punishments are encouraged by those in authority, and even elevated into I know not what sort of a principle. The chief of the regiment declared openly "that one cannot but beat the Russian soldier; one must beat the soldier, must destroy him" (an actual expression, authenticated by witnesses). Tiajelnikov, the chief of brigade, who came to hear complaints, declared before the assembled troops that "penalties of discipline are only good for stupids; for a good soldier the fist is the

thing." The fist! Really an excellent means for maintaining discipline, military honour, courage, the art of music, and skill as a veterinary in the army.

Messieurs the generals cannot apply this magic talisman to the officers ; but the principle of contempt for man as man finds its reflex in the life of these also. The soldiers are beaten, and the officers are held of no account. The officer has the privilege of punching the nose of a soldier, but in his turn he is obliged to put up with every possible injustice at the hands of his superiors. Complaints, as a rule, are of no avail, even in the most crying cases.

The infamies that especially distinguished the first squadron of the regiment of the Bougue were the work of the chief of the squadron, Matveienko, on whose part inquiry has discovered a great number of illegal proceedings ; *e.g.*, the squadron suffered from hunger because its chief annexed the soldiers' food, and sent it to his numerous relations. The dragoons did not receive their pay ; they did not even have the money sent them by their friends. The young "rotmistre," Sytchevsky, could not look on with indifference at these abuses. He protested times and again, but in vain. The dragoons themselves, their patience exhausted, decided to complain to the general of brigade, Korevo, at a review of the troops. The quartermasters (*vahmistres*) in vain threatened the soldiers, in an undertone, that they would let them have it; saying that the general was with them to-day, but that to-morrow they would have to settle matters with them. Their

complaints were inquired into. Sytchevsky, under the general's orders, confirmed the justice of the men's complaints. What was the end of the business? Sytchevsky, who had been during the review personally congratulated by the general, was put under arrest on pretext that he did not know his duty. The officer, Kopatch, against whom chiefly the soldiers' complaints had been directed, was six days after recommended for a reward. Matveienko, in spite of this business, received a regiment.

But we must return to Skariatine. Indignant at the corporal punishment of the soldiers, he tried first to get his superior, the head physician, to protest. The latter preferred not to be mixed up with disagreeables. Then Skariatine turned to the colonel. No result, or rather an unexpected one. The colonel, not wishing the protests of the young enthusiast to be renewed, simply gave the order that soldiers who had been beaten were not to be sent to the hospital. Corporal punishment was still inflicted, only the soldiers no longer received any medical assistance. Skariatine, shocked as he was, declared openly he would not give up the matter without protest. Then a plot was formed against him. The colonel asked the chief of division to recall Skariatine, although he could only accuse him of presenting arms carelessly, and smoking in places where it was forbidden. The chief of division did not consider these reasons sufficient: however, to maintain discipline, he sent orders that Skariatine should be put under arrest for a month. This over, Skariatine again addressed the doctor of his division on the abuses. The doctor grew angry. "Why do you

make so much ill blood, my dear fellow ? We see all this plainly enough, but we hold our tongues. Are we more stupid than you ? ” In order to injure Skariatine’s reputation, and thus diminish the importance of his protests, the doctor of the division ordered an inspection of the hospital, with the deliberate intention of finding some mismanagement. This was impossible ; but Skariatine was accused of neglecting his duties, and a secret report was sent stating that he was ignorant of medicine. This was all done quietly, because had it been known in the regiment, it would have provoked too much indignation. At the same time they spread the report that Skariatine was mad. The young doctor was not disconcerted. He demanded a medical inquiry into the affair of Korneienko, and as the delegation was unwilling to recognise the evident fact of the mutilation of his body, it stated in the official report that one of the doctors was “ unworthy of his profession.” This report summoned him for the first time to answer before a court ; and with this began the second phase of his struggle with the administration.

A *juge d’instruction*, commissioned to inquire into the Skariatine affair, came to the regiment of Bougue to check his affidavits. To this end he, of course, questioned the officers. Some, such as Savenkov, Jikharev, Danilevsky, obeyed the dictates of honour and duty, and bore testimony to the infamies that were known to them. This was a terrible blow, it will be understood, to the party of abuses. The chief of division came to the regiment under pretext of reviewing it. After the

review, he called all the officers round him. He began by saying that there was in the regiment some sort of intruder, Skariatine, who made it his business to set all the world by the ears, and whom certain officers had had the audacity to support. "In my opinion," the chief wound up with, "it is necessary to expel these officers from the regiment, as one drives a scabby sheep out of the flock." It is needless to say that this referred to those officers who had given evidence before the *juge d'instruction*. Savenkov, who was one of them, understood it in this sense. He spoke to the general, and asked permission to explain. The general answered that he could not accept any explanation, and that the officer could speak to the colonel of the regiment. This Savenkov did. The colonel also refused to listen to him, adding that he was of exactly the same opinion as his superior officer, and that he thought it was not the thing for an officer to answer the questions of a *juge d'instruction*. Savenkov, his honour thus impeached, demanded judgment by his peers. Many witnesses affirm that a court-martial, properly constituted, would have acquitted him. This the colonel knew well enough, and therefore he decided to manage differently from that. The court-martial sanctioned in a case of this kind by law is surrounded with formalities that make the exercise of any pressure on the officers constituting it very difficult. The chief of the regiment called together, therefore, an ordinary meeting of officers, and had an interview beforehand with the chiefs of squadron, with the object of securing Savenkov's condemnation. To exercise pressure on this meeting was

easy. The adjutant-major, Benéké, a man held in contempt by the whole regiment, took part in the discussion with a shameless pertinacity, repeating at the top of his voice : "We (he and the colonel) mean to drive out of the regiment all the Savenkovs and Jikharevs." The other friends of the colonel said openly that those who voted for Savenkov would sooner or later be expelled the regiment. After these warnings the chief demanded open voting. Savenkov was condemned. And that is the way they manage in Russia with a regimental meeting. There was nothing left Savenkov but to leave the regiment. Soon after, Jikharev, on the requisition of the colonel, had his turn. In the same way Danilevsky and Sytchevsky were expelled. Yet one more curious incident. When Savenkov lodged a complaint against this unfair court,—for he was unwilling to submit to his fate without a protest,—the colonel, who had up to that time only called him an insubordinate officer, warned the authorities that Savenkov belonged to the Socialist party. This is a frequent accusation in Russia, and involves terrible consequences, however ill-founded it may be.

In the meantime Skariatine went on with his protests ; but the president of the tribunal would not allow the accused to dwell upon certain details of the affair. Nevertheless, the trial brought out a great many things. Three times did Skariatine appeal to the minister of war ; he went himself to St. Petersburg. Surmounting difficulties almost insurmountable, he succeeded at last in submitting his report to the minister himself. To what end ? It was proposed all at once to let him off his com-

pulsory service,¹ if he would withdraw his report. "But I did not present it for that," he answered; and he refused categorically to be party to any such arrangement. Then his excellency gave orders that Skariatine should be at once expelled the regiment, and transferred to some other hospital. This result of an affair in which justice was on his side, after it had been carried as far as the foot of the throne, was, it would seem, a terrible blow to Skariatine. He fell ill. As soon as he was well, he presented his outspoken report again, with his refusal to remain in the service. This served as pretext for bringing him to trial a second time. This is how things can be managed in the Russian army.²

Yet to draw from these facts a conclusion adverse to all Russian officers would be a great error. Born in a fortress, I know the military class,—among whom I passed my younger days,—very well. It is notable for a very sympathetic nature. The feeling of honour is in the Russian officer developed in its noblest form. His sense of duty is very keen. But men capable of abusing their power are to be found everywhere, and the deplorable management of the army permits such men to do just as they will, and that is the source of the wrong-doing that kindles so much indignation among the officers. It is also the cause of that success of revolutionary propaganda among them, of which I shall speak a little later.

¹ Skariatine had finished his studies at the Academy of Medicine, and, as an exhibitioner, was now in the service.

² I take the account of this Skariatine business from my article published in 1884 in the *Messenger of the Will of the People*, an article drawn up by me from the manuscript indictment.

On nobody does the disorder of the central Government, that finds its reflex in despotic abuses in every branch of the administration, weigh so heavily as on the peasants. Over them is exercised a tyranny so incredible that the Russian saying—“The peasants, freed from the pomiechtchiks, became the serfs of the administration,” is by no means an exaggeration. One has but to look haphazard into any number of any Russian journal to come across examples of revolting violence. The oppressions and extortions of all kinds by the administration crush down the peasant. Amongst the people a whole literature has grown up of songs and proverbs that commemorate their ill-treatment. “Don’t be afraid of the Tzar; be afraid of the overseer”: “The Tzar is not to be feared, his servants are,” say the peasants; and one of their songs thus sums up the stanovoï :

“ Into some large field
Comes the stanovoï.
An important quest—
It is for a corpse.
And with him his thief
Secretary comes.
For his supper find
Victuals fresh, and then,
Just to cleanse his throat,
Brandy-bottles two.”

The song finishes by saying that the stanovoï goes away blind drunk, when he has eaten up all the food. The ouriadniks especially (a kind of mounted police appointed in the last years of Alexander II.’s reign) became notorious in the villages. These men—there are more than 5,000

of them, recruited from among the very worst riff-raff—are true adventurers in uniform. Their power is immense; they use it to commit unimaginable abuses. Here are, *e.g.*, some facts taken at random from the papers. The court of the *arrondissement* of Odessa had to inquire into the case of the ouriadnik Datzenko. This ouriadnik, when going his rounds, met a Jew, who appeared to him a suspicious character, I do not know for what reason. He made the Jew walk in front of him, and as he followed on horseback, amused himself *en route* by giving him cuts with his whip. In this fashion they came to the office of the chief of the volost, who knew and identified Trantz. Datzenko did not attach any belief to the words of the syndic, whom he abused, and then he set to beating Trantz anew. Again, at Odessa there was the case of another ouriadnik who violated, after robbing her, a woman he met in the fields.

In the province of Kanev, the ouriadnik Tcherniavsky received as a present four wagon-loads of straw. He ordered the peasants to carry it to his house. The peasants refused to do this for nothing. "What!" cried the ouriadnik, "you ask money for the transport of Government straw! Hats off!" and he knocked them off with his fist. The peasants grew angry and told him his conduct would justify them in chasing him out of the village. Then the ouriadnik noted down their names, and ordered the starosta to make them come before him, in order to draw up a report of this outrage on the police in the execution of their duty.

In the village of Balatzkoié, government of Kher-

son, a fire broke out. The labourers of the pomiechtchik Rogatchev ran up and worked hard to put it out. All at once the ouriadnik appeared with a furious outcry, and hustled about, blowing up the labourers. The pomiechtchik called his attention to the fact that the labourers had come of their own accord, and that consequently he had no right to order them about. At such high treason the ouriadnik was beside himself, and began knocking the men about with his whip. Just then the labourers of the village of Khristoforovka came on the scene. The ouriadnik, in his wrath, fell foul of them as well, knocked them about, and put every one to flight. Two peasants, at the end of this little drama, were horribly mutilated from the blows of his naghaïka (whip).

At Kakhovka (government of the Tauride), a gendarme,—this is not an ouriadnik,—going his rounds, came to the house of a peasant with a pretty wife. First of all he insisted on their feasting him. When he was drunk, he ordered the husband to leave them; but the gendarme's intentions were so palpable that the peasant refused to obey. The gendarme flew into a passion, and drawing his revolver shot the man dead.

At Chadrinsk, the secretary at a village *fête* was struck by the beauty of two young girls. He went to the bureau of common administration and ordered the sotsky (guardian) to arrest these girls, under pretext that they were creating disorders. This was done; then he violated both of them.

Perhaps the reader will think I am telling the history of Bulgaria under an invasion of bachi-

bouzouks. No, unhappily, I am speaking of Russia ; and yet these facts, horrible and revolting as they are, cannot be called exceptional. From the journals that are lying before me at the present moment, I could fill pages with the enumeration of crimes equally shocking. I could in like fashion tell of bloody vengeance exacted by the peasants on the ouriadniks, who are detested beyond all conception throughout Russia.

More than once even the Government has proved these abominations. Here, *e.g.*, is an extract from the report of the senator Polovtzev, on his inspection of the government of Kiev.¹ “The impunity of the chiefs of police erected into a system,” cries the senator, “and the absence of all means of defence for the people against the despotism of the police, are a source of corruption to the political spirit of the people. They do not believe in the possibility of securing themselves against abuses by legal means. The consciousness of its powerlessness against police despotism penetrates all classes of society ; so that whilst the ignorant peasant takes to the police officer the products of his toil, men of education and high place pay also their tribute to the police.” Thus the Government itself is cognizant of the evil, and now and then tries to limit it. But whatever may be the Tzar’s intentions, what can he do to abolish effects if he does not touch causes ?

As a phrase well-known in Russia has it, the autocracy has for its autocrat the autocracy of the bureaux, and this oligarchy is reflected below in the oligarchy of small chiefs. A power of real strength, and cap-

¹ *Students’ Journal.*

able of acting systematically, is a myth. Order has to such an extent disappeared, that the idea of defending themselves by bribery, intrigue, or violence is making huge strides among Russians. Especially among the peasants is this idea spreading. Self-defence is taking more and more the place of recourse to legal justice. Thus in Ouspensky, a peasant making complaint of a merchant who has had a dam made to stop the fish from passing into the peasant's river, utters threats. "You must prefer a complaint against the merchant," says his interlocutor; "he can't really do this." "Prefer a complaint! But his purse is chockful. There will be an order, and he won't obey it. That's all. I think this will be the best thing to do——" "What?" "Dig up its foundation. Knock the dam down, and knock the fellow down too. Then no one will have anything to complain of. It's not the same thing at all, writing out a complaint. Whilst you're writing, he's fishing and selling the fish. No, there is nothing better than acting for yourself. And above all, it is necessary to tan his hide. He won't be so ready to steal again." This man, reasoning in this way, sums up the ideas of the time. What absence of confidence in the Government this manner of thinking and of acting shows on the part of the people! And yet, in spite of all, this *régime* goes on. What force is it then that keeps it up? Is it not the exceeding weakness of those who are its foes, consciously or unconsciously?

CHAPTER II.

Political parties : Reactionary, Liberal, Revolutionary.—The mistakes of the Liberals and the Revolutionists.—Reaction.—The revolutionary staff.—Its youth among the people.—Trials and persecutions.—Terrorist movement.—Conspiracies.—Propaganda among the army.

IN a country where individual liberty does not exist, it is difficult for public opinion to split itself up into clearly defined parties. Such parties would never have room to develop action ; thus the majority of the people are not impelled to adhere one to another by anything. Further, without liberty of speech, of meeting, of agitation in elections, it is extremely difficult even for the people to find out what is its own opinion. From all these causes, the great majority of Russians, even those that have had a certain amount of education, manage to hold political ideas of the most opposed kinds. This confusion of political convictions makes instinct play in society and among the masses a much more important part in Russia than in any other land. The Russian masses act more “after the fashion of elements,” as they say, than as if guided by any definite conviction.

I ought, however, to say that if this circumstance

makes the formation of regular programmes more difficult, it is very far from assuring the reign of order and tranquillity in the country. It favours the revolutionists, as few things could, for every Russian is by instinct a revolutionist. The political constitution weighs so absurdly on all, that each feels accumulating in himself an enormous quantity of personal discontent, due to all sorts of injuries, injustices, oppressions. For very different reasons, every one in Russia is discontented. In the clever phrase of Lioubimov, one of Katkov's closest friends in Russia, "only the mountains and the forests do not complain: the mountains because they have nothing of which to complain, the forests because they are cut down."¹ This general discontent asserts itself on every favourable occasion with the more energy and disorder since the Russian, in his heart of hearts, scarcely ever feels that he is under the influence of any tradition or authority. This circumstance is of vast importance, and none of those who know Russia can doubt that, at the moment of any political disturbance, the Russian revolutionists will gain a large number of adherents from among the very men who are now calling out for the gallows on their behalf.

Just now, however, this wave of popular ideas, carried to absurdity among the people and to chaos in society, is a formidable obstacle to the formation of parties. The latter in Russia are, as a consequence, very insignificant in numbers. The mass of the people, following impulses that are purely instinctive and accidental, approves, one after another,

¹ "Against the Current;" a dialogue between two friends.

with all its heart, the opinion of this party or of that, and keeps systematically to none. In this is the greatest weakness of Russian parties, the greatest obstacle to pacific and gradual reform in the social order.

Generally, Russian parties are divided into three chief groups: (1) the Reactionaries or Conservatives; (2) the Liberals; (3) the Revolutionists, or, as they are commonly called, the Socialists. To this list may be added a fourth group, the Slavophiles, although this does not actually exist in any large numbers; and a fifth, the Nationalists, whom foreigners sometimes call the Russian party. This last does not merit even the name of party, since it has ideas as ill-defined as those that the public generally hold. In Russian literature, organs analogous to the *New Times* (*Novoïe Vremia*), that forget to-day what they said yesterday, and do not know what they are going to say to-morrow, represent the nationalist ideas. They are the true representatives of the majority, but not its guides. They only go where the wind carries them, without themselves knowing whither. It is not a tendency, but the absence of all tendency, which in literature serves as a spring-board for men who care only about the sale of their paper. Their influence on the fate of Russia is limited merely to furnishing their balance of force to whatever may be the prevailing feeling for the moment.

Thus we have only three parties to examine, as more or less independent and serious forces. Numerical superiority is, without a doubt, on the side of the Liberals. But my readers will fall into a great mistake if they form an idea of the Liberals

and of the Socialists from the parties that go by these names in Europe. The Liberals, in the true sense of the word are, with the exception of certain wholly isolated personalities, very few in Russia. Taken as a whole, the Liberals are near akin to French Radicals, and their opinions are on some points distinctly socialistic. The most characteristic organ of the Liberals, *The Messenger of Europe*, has recently published, e.g., an article of M. Slonimsky, in which the author shows the necessity of nationalization of the land, and the absurdity of the mere idea of landed property. That the article should be published in this review is sufficiently astonishing. *The Messenger of Europe* is very distinctly Liberal. But, if we turn to the bulk of the Liberals, we find there many who are quite Socialists by conviction. Among them, especially, are a large number of followers of Karl Marx and the socialism of the German school. For political programme, the Liberals have liberty of speech and of the press, local self-government, popular representation; in a word, constitutional rule. Generally, the Liberals, who have taken origin from the same intellectual movement of which I spoke above, are imbued with all the ideas that it has thrown into circulation. Their ideal is a society based on liberty and self-government, made up of advanced free individuals, with equal rights, and a material position guaranteed by a regular economic organization. If, after this, we look at the programmes of the Socialist party, we shall find it very difficult to draw a distinctive line between the ideas of this party and of the Liberals. The difficulty will be yet greater

if we pay more attention to what Socialists say than to their published programmes. Generally, in their familiar jargon, the Socialists call themselves Radicals, and in their ideas they are really very closely allied to the Radicals. I quote, as an instance, the programme of the party of the "Will of the People" (*Narodnaïa Volia*), published in 1879. Here are the eight paragraphs of which it consists :—

- (1) Popular representation, elected by universal suffrage, and with supreme authority in all questions of the general interest.
- (2) A large local autonomy, and elective nomination to all offices.
- (3) Independence of the *mir* as an economic and administrative unity.
- (4) Nationalization of the land.
- (5) A series of measures tending to bring all the factories into the hands of the workers.
- (6) Liberty of conscience, of speech, of the press, of meeting, of associations, and of electoral agitation.
- (7) Universal suffrage, without any restriction whatever.
- (8) The replacing of the standing army by a territorial army.

A large majority of Russian Liberals have but one observation to make on this programme ; it can only be realized at a blow, and, therefore, it is superfluous to put forward all these demands.

The Socialists, who have published this programme, however, declare that they only want to lay it before the people. As to demanding, they demand from the Government one thing only—the

convention of a constituent assembly. In this they will try to get their programme accepted, although they declare beforehand that they will submit to the decisions of the assembly. Assuredly, the other fractions of Russian Socialism have issued, and doubtless will yet issue, other programmes, some of them diametrically opposed to this one. But this in no sense alters the position of affairs. It only proves that among the Socialists there are greater differences than between some of the Socialists and some of the Liberals. Further, the "Will of the People" is not a group without a future. It has shown a strength that no other group, no other fraction, has. For two or three years it was, beyond a doubt, the strongest political party in Russia. Thus, even without wishing in any sense to prophesy as to its future, the programme just quoted is in itself a very important fact.

Reflecting on this, it is impossible not to come to the conclusion that the effective cause of the differences between the Socialists and Liberals is less in their programmes and aims than in the fact that the former are, and the latter are not, revolutionists. The differences are rather due to personal qualities, to temperament, to the degree of disinterestedness. A man of energy, of animation, devoted unreservedly to the public interest, will in Russia scarcely ever become a Liberal; he becomes a Socialist and revolutionist. A man more circumspect, more moderate, not in conviction, but in character, adheres to the Liberals. Thus, without saying that there is no difference of programme, it is none the less impossible not to state that the essential difference

between the two parties consists in this : that the one is decided on an active and desperate struggle with the Government, a struggle in which an enormous majority of the combatants must inevitably perish after a year or so of contest ; whilst the other, on the contrary, prefers to work by peaceful means, even by legal ones, and by means that in any case present no great danger. This is the reason the Liberal party chiefly recruits itself from among well-to-do fathers of families, holding some social position, —in fine, from among discouraged revolutionists. This is why it is the more numerous, and at the same time why, despite its evident superiority in material resources, it acts with excessive indolence and indecision, and is beaten hollow by any attack made by any small body of determined revolutionists. The revolutionary party recruits itself preferably from among the young, especially the cultured proletariat, or even from the most energetic men of the former group. As its resources are insufficient, it decides on the most desperate plans, and does not recoil in face of ends the most difficult of attainment.

In this sense the revolutionists may be looked upon as the most characteristic incarnation of the spirit of the cultured class. That is their chief strength. Unconsciously they say what others only dare think. They are doing to-day what others will only do to-morrow. This connection between the two parties is so thoroughly understood by both of them, that many Liberals often help largely the revolutionists and their enterprises.

But enough of theory !

Here is a little scene that tells much more. A household visitation by the police is going on. Amongst the lodgers is one Mirsky, who had now just come out of prison, to which he has been condemned for some trifling matter, and who, later on made an attempt on the life of the chief of the gendarmerie, Drenteln. After he has turned upside down the room of the culprits, the police officer says to Mirsky : " Ah, young man, why do you want to complete your ruin ? You would do much better to keep quiet. Let us grant that in fifty years they will build you a monument. But what's the good of it to you ? You will have long before this rotted away in prison, you know !" A police officer admits that in time monuments will be erected to revolutionists ! In 1825 a small group belonging to the cultured class in Russia attempted a military *coup d'Etat*. The insurrection was crushed, and the long reign of Nicolas is a systematic answer in the negative to the programme of the Decembrists. In 1856, at the worst time of the disastrous Crimean war, Russian society from end to end saw that the only salvation for Russia was in the programme of the Decembrists. Their memory became sacred ; the scanty remnants of that heroic generation, recalled from transportation by the emperor, were received as conquerors. The representatives of the revolutionary tradition, who had not been false to their colours in the reign of Nicolas, became the oracles of society. Hertzen in London became a sensation never known in Russia. This exile, this editor of a forbidden journal, *Kolokol* (the Clock), became a centre towards which thousands of

Russians converged. Statesmen took counsel of him ; every Russian going abroad presented himself first of all at Hertzen's. The *Kolokol* was, by official order, sent to the Commission that was studying the bases on which the peasant emancipation was to be arranged. This was the time at which all the elements of Russian Opposition rallied around the programme of the Decembrists, that they might bring to bear upon the Government an irresistible pressure. The Government was placed in a position from which there was no outlet ; the reformers were around it on every side. Alexander II. said of Nicolas Milioutine, that he was a revolutionist, a man to be watched ; and he was compelled to place him at the head of the work of the emancipation of the peasants. The emperor felt so strong an aversion from the revolutionist, that even in appointing him an adjunct of the minister, he only did so provisionally. But events were stronger than the will of the Tzar, and the minister's provisional adjunct remained "provisionally permanent," as his foes said in jest. What then was the Decembrists' programme ? The emancipation of the peasants ; the confirmation of the rights of individuals by stable laws ; the establishment of equitable justice—in a word, the representation of the people in the Government. The Emperor Alexander II., when heir to the throne, had little reputation for Liberalism. In the secret commissions, instituted by Nicolas for discussing the question of the serfs, the heir-apparent declared against the emancipation of the peasants. Immediately upon his coming to the throne, Alexander II., by a circular of the Minister of the

Interior, declared himself resolved "to protect steadfastly the rights granted by his august ancestors to the nobility." But the pressure of public opinion was too strong. All the forces of the Opposition rallied together against the *status quo*. They might even be supported by a movement of the people. Everywhere, in point of fact, the peasants were rising against serfdom. Then the emperor undertook a series of reforms. In 1863 Alexander II. himself declared that the favourable moment had arrived. He would summon the representatives of the people to take part in the affairs of the State. When in the same year he called together the Diet of Finland, he spoke with sympathy of "free institutions placed in the hands of a wise people."¹

By means of this policy the Emperor Alexander II. succeeded very adroitly in breaking the coalition of the forces of the Opposition, which had during this time committed a series of blunders that showed how little as yet was the advancement in political development of the Russians. Right policy, that of good sense, required the coalition to insist absolutely, and before anything else, on the convoking of the people's representatives at the same time as the emancipation of the peasants. Instead of this, the Moderate Liberals, although they were not deceived as to the Tzar's sincerity, agreed to give up the Constitution and to follow the Tzar, in order to realize, if only gradually and with all kinds of restrictions and reservations, the reforms indispensable to Russia. The revolutionists were not guiltless of this enormous blunder. Bakounine himself wrote,

¹ *The Free Word*, No. 56.

even in 1862 : "Whom shall we follow ? Romanov, Pougatchev, or even Pestel (one of the heroes of December 14th, 1825), if a new Pestel should appear ? Let us speak frankly. We would rather follow Romanov, if Romanov could and would translate himself from Petersburg's emperor to the people's Tzar." It is true that among the Russian revolutionists, those, a small group, who did not belong to the Emigration, felt it was ridiculous to suppose that a Romanov could be a Tzar to the people. But this group was without influence. Moreover, the revolutionists were imprudent enough to commit another huge blunder, that of losing their reputation by taking part in the Polish rising of 1863.

This rising was equally fatal to Poland and to Russia. The Government of Alexander II. took every step likely to provoke it. Really it was a tempting bait by which the Polish revolutionists, as well as the Russian, were allured. Russia owes these last a capital reproach. The national claims of the Poles were, as I have said, quite just, as far as they concerned Poland proper ; but their pretensions to White Russia, and especially to the Ukraine, were inadmissible for all Russians. The Polish revolutionists, with whom the Russians allied themselves, were willing to declare that they only demanded the reunion of the Ukraine to Poland if the people themselves had no objection to this. Could a Russian, especially a revolutionist—had he the right to—be satisfied with this reservation ? No more than if it had relation to the Government of Moscow. Had not the Ukraine proved, by a whole

century of ceaseless insurrections, that she did not wish to be Polish? Did not the hetmans of the Ukraine gather together, against Poland, volunteer armies far larger than those that the Poles could themselves put into the field against Russia? Negotiations of such a nature on the part of a Russian are strange; and an understanding with the Poles, when these put forward pretensions of any kind to these lands, can be allowed to no one. I say nothing of the inopportuneness of an alliance of this kind just at the time when the Russian revolutionists were in no particular favour with the people, and were forced to speak to them of restrictions that had to be put upon the Tzar's authority. These the people could not listen to without suspecting them, even though the proposals came from those in whom they had full confidence, from those at whose hands no noble or Polish plot was to be feared. The Government made adroit use of this blunder. The reactionary party for the first time got the upper hand. Katkov proclaimed the perfidy, the "treason of the Nihilists to Russia."

The cause was lost. The time favourable for the restriction of absolute power was gone. The Liberals and the revolutionists broke with one another. The reforms emanating from the Tzar worked very badly, and with an utter absence of sincerity. But the Liberals were content with sulking and groaning; they hoped in the future. The revolutionists remained alone, without support from above or below; they spent, too frequently in vain, their strength in conspiracies in favour of the Polish cause, and, moreover, without the least help to

Poland. The Government felt at last that its hands were free. During the last six years of the reign it did not dare to show its claws. Only in 1861 did it institute two political trials. Since the beginning of the troubles in Poland, it gave itself up without any fear to reprisals in Russia. From 1863 to 1867 it instituted political prosecutions against 160 persons; eight of these were executed. I am not taking into account punishments—the result of administrative measures—which, year by year, underwent a greater and greater extension. Neither am I taking into account the Polish trials. In Poland at that time thousands of men perished. Taking advantage of the Liberal inaction, and seeing that the support of the people was wanting to the revolutionists, the Government, with increasing boldness, abandoned the idea of large reforms, treated the press without any consideration, vetoed all the independent organs. These prosecutions, this policy, irritated the revolutionists more and more. In 1866 the stored-up discontent broke out in Karakozov's attempt on the emperor's life. The Government set the police going, and gave the notorious Mouraviev, the Hangman, a veritable dictatorship. He had just finished his bloody work in Poland. An actual reign of terror began, and in society a violent reaction set in. Katkov was right enough when he cried, "The blow Karakozov struck has cleared the air."

The year 1866 was a year of crisis in the Government policy. Yet the reforms begun years before were finished, but with every possible limitation. In 1870 the last of them was promulgated: com-

pulsory military service for all. So enfeebled did the revolutionary forces appear, that from 1865 to 1870, only one political action was brought against only one person. Yet the revolutionary movement had not disappeared. It was represented by a youth so inexperienced that it was incapable of undertaking any serious attempt against the Government. Netchaïev—a man of indomitable energy, child of the people, of only average education, despotic, not particular about the means he employed, but a fanatic for revolution, a man capable of playing in more favourable times a large part in history—tried to get together in the ranks of the young men a secret society. The Government struck one more blow. In 1871 the great trial of the eighty-eight initiates of Netchaïev took place; transports by the hundred ate once more into the ranks, small enough already, of the revolutionists. The years 1870-72 form one of the dullest periods of Russian history. The Government, at last at rest, governed with a carelessness, a contempt for the people and society, an absence of any large conception, finally a licence, that recalled the worst days of Byzantium. I have told already of the sombre hues in which Kochelev paints the decay of the higher Government circles of that time. How closely those impressions of the old Slavophile resemble mine, those of a young student just come to the capital from the heart of a far-away province! How useless seemed to me everything I saw and heard in the capital! And the contempt for the Government this spectacle stirred within me!

I call to mind an episode that occurred, so to say, under my own eyes. A business man, a rich cloth manufacturer, was one day suddenly summoned to St. Petersburg. On his return he told in wonderment the story of what he had seen at court. This was the state of affairs. One of the members of the imperial family had designed a blue uniform, the most effective thing imaginable. The heir-apparent, the present emperor, was enthusiastic about this uniform. His father did not like to say no to his son, but the War Minister was terrified at this fancy, which would make all the store of cloth for the army useless, and would involve immense expense. To induce the Tzar to give up this fancy, he had commanded the manufacturer to come, as an expert. In a private conversation, the minister conjured the manufacturer to invent something to convince the heir-apparent and make him give up his whim. On the morrow the manufacturer went to the palace, and there saw a scene in no wise in harmony with such ideas as he held as to the seriousness of the occupations of the Tzars. The immense saloon was littered with scraps of cloth, with engravings, with patterns. The heir-apparent, very agitated and red in the face, was struggling about on the floor, crawling over the cloth, measuring and arranging the scraps, so as to see which colours harmonized best. Some officers were crawling about on the floor with him. Certain others stood around, showing the liveliest interest in the question that enthralled the heir-apparent. The manufacturer was received with open arms. He was on their side, wasn't he? Wasn't the cloth

excellent, and much better than the old kind? What was to be done? The manufacturer, who found it as much as he could do to keep serious, pretended to discuss the matter seriously, and examined the cloth closely. In reality he had already studied his part; his plan was made up as he came along: he was to discover that the cloth lost its colour rapidly. He pointed this out to the heir-apparent. The latter was sorely troubled, but had to give way. Only in this way was the exchequer able to escape a useless expenditure of millions of roubles. This was the sort of thing that one heard of the Government, and it was not the worst. There was talk of bribes received by the members of the imperial family; of palace orgies. The better type of men were transported, or abandoned themselves to idleness in the depth of their despair. The administration systematically crushed out self-government. The men of the zemstvo folded their arms; the press degraded itself.

The remonstrances of the most thoughtful men, the appeals made in the name of the interests of Russia, met with brutal contempt. In 1870 the Moscow nobility sent the Tzar an address on the occasion of the issuing of the decree for compulsory service. In this address, whilst testifying their gratitude for this new measure, they expressed the hope that the emperor would crown the edifice of reform by granting the representatives of the people the right to take part in the government of the State. I cannot call to mind the exact words of this address, but that was the general sense of it.

The emperor was beside himself with rage. At Moscow the rumour ran that an exchange of laconic despatches between him and the Governor-General of Moscow had taken place in this fashion : " You read the address ? " " I read it." " Imbecile ! " The emperor was furious that the Governor-General had not prevented the sending such an address to him.

This Government, at once despotic and feeble, which made social reforms a political dodge, threw many people of the country into discontent. On the other hand, events showed only too clearly the impotence of the Liberal party, and even the impotence of society in general. The attention of every man of energy, on the look-out for means of action, was turned, in spite of himself, on the people, in the hope of finding there more of life and strength. The old democratic leanings of the intelligent class were quite favourable to this. Besides, socialist ideas were spreading further and further in Russia. The interest taken in the development of Socialism by the Russians is seen in the fact that the first translation of Karl Marx' "Das Kapital" appeared in Russian.¹ Finally, the trust in the people received a great impulse from the great popular movements in Europe, the development of the International, which to those in the heart of Russia seemed a giant force, the Commune of Paris, the Spanish revolution. All these influences told with the more force on Russian youth, in that a multitude of young people of both sexes, on account of the diffi-

¹ [An English translation just appeared this year. Translator.]

culties they met with in the higher schools, went abroad, and there came under the influence of the Emigration. The latter numbered in its ranks Bakounine, Lavrov, and, lastly, Tkatchev, although the last-named cannot be compared with either of the others in capacity or influence.

Mikhail Bakounine, a man of immense worth, eloquent orator, indefatigable agitator, indomitable conspirator, had long ere this been renowned among the revolutionists of Europe. In 1848 he was already fighting on the barricades in Dresden, and was for some time dictator there. It is said that the news of the honour thus done to him greatly flattered the Emperor Nicolas. "Ah," said he ; "with me he was only a lieutenant ; with the Germans he becomes a dictator. Brave fellow !" In spite of this enthusiasm, when Bakounine, arrested by the Austrians, was given up to the Russian authorities, the emperor shut him up in the fortress of Peter and Paul, wherein he passed nine years, loaded with chains and enduring privations that his athletic physique alone enabled him to bear. Bakounine was then transported to Siberia. From Siberia he escaped to America ; thence he went to Europe, for a time helped Hertzen in his work as publicist, then took an active part in the Polish insurrection, and at last became Karl Marx' rival in the International, and the leader of the anarchists, in whose founding he played a large part.

Piotre Lavrov is a man of quite another kind. Formerly professor of mathematics in the Academy of Artillery, he gained great renown in Russia by his immense and rare learning, and by the extent

and varied nature of his knowledge. Interned in the government of Vologda, he escaped and went abroad. There he carried on his scientific work. A confirmed Socialist, his theories are not the consequence of his temperament, but the result of a profound conviction, constantly strengthened by a multitude of facts that this learned writer takes with equal success from history, anthropology, psychology, and political economy. Lavrov is in short one of the chief founders of Russian Socialism. The "Historical Letters" and the "Element of Government in the Society of the Future" will always be standard works in Russian literature. The former of these had, especially in Russia, a special effect.

Both Bakounine and Lavrov look upon the socialist *régime* as the only equitable one; both imagine that in the Russian people, in its communal customs, there are more or less evident leanings in the direction of this. Also they agree in the admission that a revolutionist ought to act, not only for, but by, the people. But there is a difference between them. Lavrov has an especial belief in the socialist instincts of the people. He believes that the creation among the people of a small minority of thinking Socialists is essential, and that these would then form the nucleus of the revolutionary party. Upon these would rest the duty of bringing to a head the social revolution in Russia. Thus Lavrov thinks of first importance propaganda armed with all the force of science. Bakounine had an especial belief in the revolutionary tendencies of the people, and made direct appeal to immediate outbreak. It is necessary to make the people rise,

and then all will go on of itself. This divergence at the outset depends again in part on the different ways in which they look upon the organization of society. Bakounine is an Anarchist; Lavrov, a Socialist of the Marx school, admits the importance of the element of government. The question of the organization of the society of the future seems to Bakounine of little importance; to Lavrov it is a question of capital importance.

Tkatchev came on the stage a little later, and exercised but an insignificant influence compared with that of Lavrov and Bakounine. His ideas are those of a pure Jacobin. Not troubling about influencing the people, revolutionists must make a *coup d'Etat*, and seize upon the dictatorship. This was repeating the ideas of Netchaïev, ideas that the conduct of the latter had compromised. The frightful despotism of Netchaïev, and the freedom with which he applied his principle that "the end justified the means," had left, this long time past, in the intelligent Russian class a feeling of aversion from Jacobinism. Besides, he had against him the feeling of veneration for the people, for the sacredness of its will. Yet it is necessary to say that, in spite of the large number of men of ability under whose influence the revolutionary movement of the intelligentsia developed, it is doubtful whether the latter would have found in any of these its formula, and the true meaning of its part in history. Read the masters of the movement. You will not find in their works the explanation of what was done by their pupils, by this multitude often more under the influence of its instinct as a crowd than under that of

logical formulas. What theory in sociology will explain to us that crusade, undertaken in 1873, by thousands of young people who went among the people? It really was a crusade. The young folk—for the most part they were young—gave up the universities, gave up their relations; young girls gave up a brilliant life in society. No one thought of himself, of his own existence. The great cause engrossed all thoughts. Such was the nervous tension of the time, that men and women bore without falling ill the most frightful privations, to which they were least accustomed. And all this without the slightest personal interest of the calculating kind, in opposition to personal comfort, acquired habits, deeply-rooted affections. These people gave up all their past. They no longer kept their own property. If any one hesitated to give his fortune for the cause, he soon excited commiseration filled with contempt. They destroyed their future. Like early Christians, they said, "I renounce the devil and all his works, and all his pride; I spit upon him." Often people holding a very good social position were encountered among them. Voīnarsky, elected, at about forty years of age, justice of the peace in his village, gave himself up to the propaganda, after having given all his fortune, forty million roubles, for the cause. Kovalik, president of the assembly of justices of the peace in the government of Tchernigov, landed proprietor, a man of remarkable capacity, did the same. Prince Krapotkine, already known as a geologist, charged with special missions by the Governor-General of Eastern Siberia, master of an independent fortune, became a

mere working painter. Young girls belonging to good families, rich heiresses, came and worked in the factories as ordinary workwomen ; Batiouchkova, the Soubbotines, Fighner, Lioubatovitch, Bardina. In many cases they were beautiful women who had been the rage at aristocratic balls. They gave up everything to go among the people. Why ? To raise them ? To teach them ?

This would be answered in one manner by Bakounine, in another by Lavrov. It would be explained in one manner or in another even by those who went among the people ; but in point of fact there was as foundation for this something stronger than all reasoning and than all intentions. It was a feeling like that home-sickness that draws the exile towards his native land. The people were the fatherland calling to the soul of the educated class. To get back home, whence social conditions, the accidents of birth, of education, of occupation, have left you ! More resonant than all reasoning, all intentions, sounded the voice of that inner spiritual relationship between the intelliguentia and the people. To be with the people, to share their existence, to live with their joys and sorrows, to be one with them in spirit, to act as a son or daughter of the populace !

“To be in spirit father and the son
Of all the people, that's a life well worth
The labour, and a labour worthy life.”

Every Russian can say from the heart these lines of the Polish poet. It is just at this time that the word “narodnik” comes into the language. It is from “narod,” the people, and signifies literally

democrat. It is applied to one who not only works for, but in the spirit of, the people. Had political life in Russia been free to any extent, this emigration to the people would, without doubt, have given over all the masterships in schools, all posts as writers, as assistant surgeons, all trades (artisan and agricultural) to the intelliguentia. Assuredly it would have been successful in organizing a powerful party among peasants and artisans. Many examples show that the peasants lived in perfect agreement with these emigrants, and that a strong influence was exerted on them by the latter. On the other hand, the peasants' influence on the propagandists who lived in their midst is beyond all doubt. This influence brought them back from the far-away region of theory to real questions of daily life. It recalled them from the search after the most perfect social *régime* to the struggle with the koulak, with the stanovoï, to the question of the zemstvo, the village, the school, to the organization of this or that artel. In short, this peasant-artisan party, though it had certainly a programme strongly tinged with socialism, had nothing Utopian in it. Reality made it quite other than that.

The persecutions the Government made the propagandists endure were terrible. The official returns prove that in six years, 1873 to 1879, 2,884 persons were prosecuted for political crimes. These consisted sometimes in propaganda of a socialist or revolutionary character, sometimes in the mere fact that they were educating the people, or that they preferred giving up some office and living as a peasant in the country. In the famous trial of the

193, the indictment in which included more than 700 people, the immense majority were arrested without having done anything. A body of emigrants to the people gathers together, comes to a village, starts some cooperage or forge, and begins to associate with the peasants. After one or two months, the police come down upon the emigrants and arrest them all. The inquiry begins. The propagandists are in prison, and what prisons! Out of the whole 265 inculpated, who underwent preventive imprisonment, until the trial that is called that of the 193, the majority were in prison beforehand two years, a smaller number three, several four. When judgment was given, of the 700 arraigned in the indictment, 100 were condemned. Therefore 86 per cent. of them were arrested, suffered preventive imprisonment, in some cases died or went mad, without having done anything; so clearly innocent that even the *procureurs* could not bring any convincing proofs against them. Now picture to yourself the position of a young enthusiast, thrilled to fanaticism by the idea of serving the people's cause. Before him pass, as in a dream, the short period of propaganda; then the prison; the terrible solitary confinement in a cell five paces long; the prison rations at the rate of five kopecks a day; months, years of putrefaction, of going mad—in which, looking back, he sees nothing, looking forward, sees only transportation, the bagnio, or death. And with all this, such longing for life and work!

“ Could I, not as a cold and silent corpse
That rots beneath a narrow coffin-lid,

Bear but some aid in their devoted fight
To those that combat in the people's cause !
Yet when the austere moment comes, and when
The final battle rages down the blast,
From forth the darkness of this sepulchre
Shall pass my cry that biddeth them 'Good speed !'"

These lines are those of the young revolutionary poet, Verbovtchanine, who has passed in prison the greater part of his young life. Cast into prison for the crime of propaganda, he has undergone four years of preventive seclusion, and must yet undergo long years of hard labour. As if seized with a fatal presentiment, he ends with an outcry of despair.

"Implacable is death ; when it has borne
My body to the tomb, it will release
No more ; will chain my will, my strength, my hate,
My love."

This implacable persecution, or to speak more accurately, this extermination, at least produced on the mind of the public the most painful impression. The mother of a young man condemned to the bagnio, who was to undergo his penalty in the frightful central prison, addressing a group of *procureurs* and *juges d'instruction*, cried aloud : "Until this moment I loved the Tzar ; now I hate and despise him." These terrible condemnations to prison, hurled right and left by the hundred ; the appearance of those young people emaciated, worn out by torments, who but a little while before were overflowing with life, produced an impression the more terrible seeing that what was punished was speech only—propaganda. From the bench of the accused a woman rises, her face intellectual, her manner modest, her voice thrilling with the convic-

tion of her words. It is Sofia Bardina, one of the most notable personalities of the movement. She has just been listening to the astounding speech of the *procureur* on the destruction of the family and of property, on anarchy, and she answers him : "Property! I have never repudiated it. On the contrary, I dare lay claim to defend it, for I recognise that every one has a right to the property secured by his labour. Tell me, is it I who destroy property, or the manufacturer, who, leaving to the workman 1s. 3d. of the day's labour, takes the other 2s. 3d. for nothing? Or the speculator, who, gambling on the stock-exchange, ruins thousands of families, and enriches himself at their expense, without himself producing anything?

"Communism as compulsory, neither I nor any other of the propagandists preaches. We only claim the right of the labourer to all the product of his labour.

"As to the family, I should like to ask what it is that undermines it? Is it the social *régime* that compels the woman to abandon her family and go into the factory to earn a meagre wage—the factory in which she and her children must become demoralized; is it this *régime*, which forces the woman in her misery to become a prostitute? Or is it we who are undermining the family, we who are trying to root out this misery?

"As to religion, I can but say that I have always remained faithful to the spirit of religion, and to its fundamental principles as they were preached by the very founder of Christianity.

"I am accused of exciting to revolt. But I have

never urged the people to direct revolt. . . . Massacres, as massacres, are hateful to me. . . . I admit only that the revolution by force, under certain given conditions, is a necessary evil."

At this time the Russian revolutionists were much cried down as anarchists, and in fact, theoretically, they did for the most part called themselves anarchists. It was a very inoffensive anarchy, which translated itself into a sort of nebulous ideal of limitless liberty that the future was to realize. Sofia Bardina has thrown some light on this question. "The public ministry," she went on, "says again that we wish to introduce an era of anarchy; . . . but this word, in the sense in which the literature of to-day employs it, and as I myself understand it, does not mean disorder and despotism. It is not despotism, for it recognises that the liberty of one person ends where that of another begins. It is only the negation of that vexatious authority which stifles the free development of society."

The speech of Sofia Bardina, some short fragments of which only I have quoted, produced an immense effect. She that spoke it was condemned to nine years' hard labour. For what crime? Every one involuntarily was asking himself this question. Involuntarily then men gave themselves up to a meditation full of anguish, put into wonderful words by a poet no one will suspect of revolutionary tendencies.—¹

"And what is she to me? Nor wife, nor love,
Nor daughter well-beloved. Why all the night
Does this sad vision hold me from my rest?

¹ Polonsky.

Why does this dream eternally return?
Young, in a prison without air, a cell
Whose narrow arches seem to crush the soul.
A bed within the damp and noisome dark,
From which two eyes that burn with fever-flame
Look out without a thought, without a tear,
And from the bed hang almost to the ground
Long trails of heavy hair. The lips are stone,
And the pale hands across the paler breast
Are clenched in weakness on the dauntless heart,
Whose future is without one single hope."

This dolorous nightmare weighed on every one against his will. How many Russians has it driven to risk their own lives, if by any means they might alleviate in some measure the lot of these martyrs!

By this community of feeling, and by the affinity of ideas between the pacific and the militant party of the cultured class, one can explain the help the Liberals so often give to the revolutionists. The Liberals are continually accused of cowardice, and assuredly severe reproaches are their due from Russia on account of their cowardice. But for it the Katkovs would not at the present time hold rule in Russia. But it is difficult to reproach Russian society for failing in humanity on any occasion where terrible peril was not involved. I remember perfectly that at the time of the liberation of some hundred prisoners mixed up with the affair of the 193, these were to a man taken care of by people out of kindness. The greater part of them were set free, for some unknown reason, in the night. The hour was late. For many hours women had been standing at the prison gates, waiting for the coming out of the prisoners. A group of political prisoners appeared on the threshold, asking one another

where to go—to the right hand or the left. Not one of them had any money. They had friends, three years ago, but where were they? Without a doubt they had long since gone away. "Gentlemen," a voice came out of the darkness, "does not one of you need an asylum?" It was a high-born woman in her private carriage. Many a fault shall be forgiven to Russian society for this warmth of compassion for suffering.

As to fear, who would not feel it? Just for having shown pity, people are sent away, transported, whole families are ruined. One's heart is torn at the memory of certain scenes, such *e.g.* as happened at Odessa in the terrible times of Governor-General Todtleben. As you pass by the prison, suddenly at a window with bars of rusty iron, two fair children's heads look out, prattling upon the street. Yes, these are children—a little girl of five, a boy of four. How is it these poor little flowers are in this place? Alas! their father has been arrested for the crime of compassion. He has contributed five roubles to a proscribed fund for helping transported political offenders; he has said at his club that such cruel prosecutions on the part of the Government are really shocking; he is suspected of having known a revolutionist of importance. The unfortunate sympathizer is to be transported to Eastern Siberia by administrative decree, and his family with him. It is impossible not to fear, impossible not to tremble. And yet this society, trembling, terrorized as it is, can and does sacrifice itself generously. A revolutionist is trying to escape from prison. He is a man of courage bordering on rashness, of great strength.

Two comrades help him. They attack the police, who are taking the prisoner from one prison to another. After a brief but severe skirmish, the prisoner succeeds in escaping out of the hands of his guards—bloody, covered with dust—in the struggle he has been thrown down three times,—his clothes in rags. He rushes at top speed in the first direction that offers, separating from his comrades, who also take flight. The police, aroused by whistles, pursue them on all sides. Whither to flee in such a terrible state of affairs? He dashes into the first house he comes across. In it lives a Liberal, whom he does not know, but of whom he has accidentally heard mention. The runaway opens the door abruptly. “Pardon me, but I am a political prisoner. I have run away. They are after me. Let me wash and change my things.” The master of the house, stupefied, brings without a word water and soap, opens at once his wardrobe. All this time the police are rummaging from top to bottom all the houses near, not knowing exactly into which the runaway has fled. In a few moments his toilet is finished. How to get out? The master of the house shows him the servants’ staircase, and the fugitive escapes safely.

If these persecutions carry the fermentation even into the most peaceful divisions of the cultured class, it is easy to imagine the impression they produce on the revolutionists. Already, by its very composition, the revolutionary party, that best of all the energy of Russia, is by no means disposed to allow any one to strike it with impunity. Appeals to vengeance begin to be heard. The bitter

reproach of Mikhaïlov, hurled at the Russian revolutionists of 1861, comes back to mind :

“Why then is hate so silent in you all ?
Why, O my brothers, is love silent too ?
Has love but tears for our atrocious wrongs ?
Has hate not strength to threaten and to strike ? ”

In 1877 a pamphlet appeared full of violent reproaches of the revolutionists. “Absorbed in ideal abstractions, they have managed to get rid of the natural sentiments inherent in every free man.” This pamphlet, this appeal to vengeance, is significantly dedicated to the memory of Dmitri Karakozov.¹ If Dmitri Karakozov was only really remembered two years later, yet by degrees the revolutionists began to show their claws. In theory they inclined more and more to the idea of overturning the Government, and that at once. Under the influence of this idea, their programme became more revolutionary and less socialistic. The people must be roused in the name of questions that are *even now* stirring in their midst. A powerful organization, “Land and Liberty,” with many ramifications in the provinces, where its members founded colonies among the people, then began to develop. This organization hoped to formulate the people’s complaints, and to rouse the people under the rallying cry of those complaints. At the same time defence against the police was necessary. They must form themselves into a defensive body, that with armed hand should repulse the Government attacks. The executive committee of the revo-

¹ “The Bachi-bouzoucks of St. Petersburg,” 1877.

lutionary socialist party at Kiev tried to fill this rôle. In the minds of men and women, isolated but in large number, the idea dawned of getting political rights by terror. This idea was also taken up by the executive committee of the revolutionary socialist party. Under the influence of this frame of mind, even before it took shape in the organization of secret societies, the revolutionists began killing spies here and there. But the spark was put to the fire by the famous pistol-shot fired by Vera Zassoulitch at the Prefect Trépov, on January 24th, 1878, at St. Petersburg.

Some months before, on July 13th, 1877, by the orders of this same Trépov, the political prisoner, Bogolioubov, had been beaten with rods in the St. Petersburg prison. His comrades, who could hear the cries of the victim, set up a tremendous banging at their barred windows—they hurled all sorts of insults at Trépov. In their impotent anger, they tried to break windows and bars, but the prison of stone and iron was too strong for their pigmy efforts. One by one the gaolers took them from their cells, beat them until the blood flowed, and then flung them into a dungeon. Many took an oath to kill Trépov the first time he appeared in the prison. But he never appeared. Vera Zassoulitch named herself as instrument of the public indignation. Trépov was wounded. Vera was brought to trial, and the jury returned a verdict of acquittal. This unexpected acquittal called forth an explosion of tremendous enthusiasm throughout Russia. A Liberal publicist of some ability, in one of his articles said : “The righteous acquittal of Zassoulitch will take a heavy

weight from the public conscience." It seemed to show that conscience that, as yet, it had not lost all fine feeling. This estimate is true enough. In the verdict of the jury, Russian society hailed the triumph of its conscience over the cowardice it had shown in view of the despotic excesses of the Government. The crowd that crammed the approaches to the court of justice saluted the acquitted woman with shouts of enthusiasm. The gendarmes tried to re-arrest Zassoulitch, but they were driven back by the crowd, and the heroine of the day set off at full speed in a carriage placed at her disposal by one of her admirers.

The shot fired by Zassoulitch was, as it were, the signal for a whole series of political murders and attempted murders. The Government, for a moment discouraged, answered by increased severity, by more punishments. Kovalsky was executed at Odessa. The Government's vengeance fell with especial force on those imprisoned in the central prison. They were in fact buried alive. But Stepniak has depicted with such eloquence, in "*Russia under the Tzars*," life in the central prison, that I need not draw again the frightful picture. The struggle grew desperate on both sides. On April 2nd, 1879, Alexander Soloviev, taking the initiative for himself, attempted the life of the Tzar. The Tzar escaped, and answered the attempts by the erection of gibbets and the declaration of a state of siege. From the latter days of April to the month of August, 1876, in St. Petersburg, Kiev, and Odessa thirteen men were hanged. Among them was Dmitri Lisogoub. Wholly devoted to the

cause of the Revolution, he had an immense fortune, valued at about 400,000 roubles, and this he gave for the cause. As to himself, he lived like a beggar, dreading the expenditure of a farthing of this money, which to him was the property of them all. Lisogoub took no part in the revolutionary enterprises ; all that he concerned himself with was the turning of his wealth into ready money. This was a veritable torture to him burning to fight for the cause. But he had only time to give the revolutionists a very small portion of his fortune. A friend, in whom he had full confidence, denounced his projects to the Government, and received as recompense his fortune. The *procureur*, not wishing to make public the name of this wretch, could not at the trial use his depositions, so that there was not any legal proof against Lisogoub. But political trials in Russia are only a formality. The fate of the accused is almost always settled beforehand in accordance with the instructions given by the secret police. Lisogoub was hanged. Vittenberg, who, as he died, implored his comrades to forgive his death, and not to take vengeance on his executioners, was also among those hanged.

It is necessary to note here that the penalty of death is absolutely foreign to Russian habits. It does not even exist in the penal code. It is only in the military code, and outside that for attempts on the person of the emperor only. If, e.g., the Government deems it necessary to punish by death some terrible assassin, it cites him by special decree before a military tribunal ; until recently this extreme method of procedure was rarely employed.

The enforcement of the capital penalty was in Russia a terrible, unwonted spectacle that shocked men. In 1825, when five of the conspirators were to be hanged, no one would build their gallows. Cases in which the rope breaks with the weight of the man to be hanged are very frequent in Russia. In 1825, in the cases of the five just referred to, it broke three times. The same accident occurred again at the execution of the authors of the attempt of the 13th of March, at the execution of Ossinsky, and in other instances. It is not easy to find an executioner. Only criminals sentenced to death and pardoned by way of salary for the performance of this hideous function will undertake it. The executioner lives in a prison himself, and is under surveillance there. He is an outcast from all society. It has happened ere now, that in a prison full of convicts not one could be found willing to undertake this office. Frolov, the notorious executioner, who for many years travelled up and down Russia and performed all the executions, is for this reason a man almost impossible to replace.¹ But even he only goes through his work dead-drunk and scarcely conscious.

The following anecdote has been published before now, and I have myself heard it from the lips of men holding official position at the court of justice. When Sofia Perovskaia was condemned to death, the rumour was rife in the legal world that she would be pardoned because Frolov said he would not hang her. "I can't," he said. "I've hanged lots of men. I can't lift my hand against

¹ Frolov is at the present time in prison for stealing.

a woman." In any case, whether it was true or not, this conversation was repeated in the smoking-room of the Court of Justice at St. Petersburg. A young man, a worthless fellow, despised by his companions on account of his unnatural habits, was present. He roared out, "Oh, well ; she shan't be pardoned for want of an executioner ! If Frolov can't hang her, I'll offer to take his place." This zealous willingness delighted the authorities ; the young monster was noted, and now holds a post of considerable importance in the police.

Let me get back to my story. This applying the penalty of capital punishment filled the revolutionists with despair and rage. Of course it did not inspire any fear. On the contrary, the longing for vengeance was stirred to the greatest extent possible. But on whom to take it ? "The Tzar !" answered millions of voices ; "the Tzar," who himself encourages the cruelties, who by his own authority increases the penalties that the courts inflict. This, almost incredible as it seems, did occur in 1878. The Emperor Alexander II. used his supreme power, not to mitigate the decree of the court, as monarchs sometimes do, but to increase the penalties of some scores of the condemned. This was done by way of reprisal for the pistol-shot of Vera Zassoulitch. Then the thought of taking vengeance on the emperor began to be in the air. On all sides men and women were enkindled with a desire to kill the Tzar. Among them were many women, Perovskaïa, Helfmann, Fighner, Iakimova —a very significant fact, as showing how deeply the emperor had wounded Russian moral feelings.

But a certain reaction occurred in the Russian revolutionary movement. The effect of this reaction was seen in the two revolutionary congresses at Lipetsk and Voronej in the summer of 1879. The party most energetic among the revolutionists fixed as its immediate aim the obtaining, first of all, of political reforms. This reaction is easily understood, for the tyranny of the Tzar, past all imagining, showed that it was peremptorily necessary to limit absolutism. Quite recently, in 1878, the revolutionists left completely on one side the question of the limitation of the Tzar's authority, and demanded (1) liberty of speech and of the press; (2) trial by jury for political offences; (3) amnesty for all past political crimes.¹ In 1879 it seemed to them that nothing of this sort could be gained unless limits were placed to absolute power. The revolutionists, who took the name of the party of "The Will of the People," demanded of the Government the convocation of a constituent assembly. The executive committee of the party proposed the organization of a conspiracy to force the Government into this convocation, or failing that, to overturn it. An energetic organization of forces began. In the early years of the movement no attention had been paid to the organization of their forces. There was even an opposition to the centralization and discipline indispensable to real work. As soon as the democratic programme of the group, "Land and Liberty," appeared, with the imminent probability of a contest, a reaction towards organization set in.

¹ "Assassination of Lieutenant-General Mezentsev, chief of gendarmeries, St. Petersburg," 1878.

The executive committee demanded a discipline and centralization quite military in their character. This is a starting-point in the later years of the movement. At the same time, the executive committee undertook a series of attempts on the emperor's life. This was at that time the fatal duty of all who wished to acquire popularity with the revolutionists. "Vengeance on the Tzar!" was the general cry; and whatever regret the leaders of the movement had at spending their strength in an undertaking of such difficulty, and that did not lead directly to the end the party had in view, they could not get out of it. The attempts on the life of the Tzar began on November 10th-22nd, 1879, and ended on March 1st-13th, 1881, in the death of Alexander II.

Such was the end of this prince, who had shot and hung thirty political offenders, had sent two hundred into hard labour, and transported many thousands. The memory he left behind him is one of pain; and posterity, even if it pities the miserable fate of this Tzar, who began life so brightly, will not forget that among those hanged was a boy Rozovsky, accused only of having posted up certain proclamations.¹

His successor, immediately upon his coming to the throne, received from the revolutionists a declaration, in which they proposed to him that he should put an end to the struggle by giving himself up to the decision of the representatives of the people. The Tzar made answer by fresh executions. At the present time [1885], within four years, he has already

¹ Rozovsky was, I think, eighteen.

executed fifteen persons, among them one woman. Condemnations to prison, and especially deportation by administrative measure,¹ are going on finely. The struggle is breaking out anew. I am not about to write the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, much less that of any particular party or organization. That is why I do not go into the details of the incidents of this contest, interesting as they are. But as I end, it is impossible not to ask ourselves one grave question. What is the importance of this movement—what are its results?

Taking it as a whole, this question is easy. It is not as easy to solve in detail. Everything of service in answering it is shrouded in mystery. The police keep their reports secret; the revolutionists, of course, do the same. Yet the small data that are available show that this movement is assuming very large proportions. The organized revolutionary forces have always been very small, although the organization of the executive committee just before March 1st–13th, 1881, numbered nearly 500 men.² But the number of organized forces gives no idea as to the general revolutionary strength. Official documents² give 1,611 persons accused on account of political crimes from March, 1873, to December, 1876, inclusive. In this list are jumbled together those who were summoned before the courts and those who had to undergo punishment by administrative measure. From 1877

¹ "Almanack of the Russian Revolutionists, 1883."

² Malchinsky: "A Glance at the Socialist Revolutionary Movement in Russia."

to 1879 the number of the latter is unknown; but the number of persons subject to judicial inquiries rises to 1,273, crimes of high treason not included, and, including these, to 2,380.

As to Alexander III.'s reign, reference only to the incomplete chronicles of the revolutionist publications from 1881 to 1884 shows us nearly 2,000 persons arrested on political grounds; this also without reckoning crimes of high treason. These latter, it must be noted, are increasing in an enormous proportion. In 1877 there were 246 of them; in 1878, 368; in 1879, 493. After the death of Alexander II., the number of crimes of high treason grew to an astounding extent. In eight months, March 1st-13th to November 1st-13th, 1881, there were 4,008 actions of this kind.¹ This scandalous number forced the Government to give orders not to bring people before the courts for affairs of this kind, but to punish the culprits by administrative measures.

This increase in the number of high-treason cases is the more significant as the persons accused are almost wholly soldiers, peasants, and other folk of lowly position. In most cases they are even illiterate. The revolutionary propaganda among the people is, in point of fact, far from remaining without influence. At the present moment, in the large manufacturing centres, are to be found a great many intelligent artisans who have read much, and are genuine revolutionists. They are always trying to organize, and although, as a rule, they are unsuccessful in this, yet certain of these organizations, *e.g.* The Workers'

¹ *The Will of the People*, Nos. 6, 8, 9.

Alliance of the North, founded by Kaltourine, who blew up the Winter Palace, number many hundreds of members. No political murder, not even the assassination of the Tzar, has taken place in Russia without the working classes taking part in it. Rarely does a political trial occur in which the workers are not implicated. In short, the artisans of the towns to-day, like the intelligentsia, form an integral part of the revolutionary movement. This is, beyond a doubt, a very important result for the revolutionists, since fifteen years ago it would, I think, have been very difficult to find one revolutionist to ten thousand artisans.

It is difficult to estimate exactly the success of revolutionary propaganda in the army among the soldiers ; yet certain facts show it has not been without results.

In 1881, at the time of the Tzar's death, the revolutionists sent out a number of proclamations explaining this deed to the peasants, to the Cossacks, to the factory hands, to the people of the Ukraine. These proclamations went everywhere in thousands, and this is what happened at Saratov. Somebody dropped one of them in a barrack. The soldiers picked it up and stuck it on the wall of their w.c. They ran to read it by the hundred. This going and coming attracted the attention of a sergeant-major ; he followed them, tore down the proclamation, and carried it to the chief of the regiment. The colonel sent for the soldiers, and called upon them quite earnestly to point out the man that had stuck up the proclamation. "We don't know, colonel." Then the colonel asked if

they had read it. The soldiers declared not one of them had, and so obstinately that at last the colonel believed them. The idea struck him that he might turn the occasion to account by compromising the revolutionists in the eyes of the soldiers. "Very well, then," said he; "listen. I'll read it to you, that you may know what these wretches want." And he, holding the paper before him, made up a whole string of threats and insults to the army. As soon as the colonel had gone, the barrack was filled with the sound of many triumphant voices. "You see, comrades," they cried, "we told you so. The chiefs only tell lies. You see he has lied in our teeth. On the paper is printed one thing, and he reads out to us another." And after this, amongst the groups of soldiers could be heard eager discussions as to what means should be taken to find the revolutionists and join them. One of the soldiers knew a workman in the town who was supposed to be a revolutionist. A number of soldiers came to see him, and plied him with questions, that they might know which of their officers were on their side. "We know," said the soldiers, "that there are some of your men among our officers. Tell us their names, that we may know them. In case of any rising, we will garotte the others, and give the command to them." These same soldiers were quite hurt that the revolutionists had not issued a proclamation to the army. "They've written to every one—peasants, workmen, Cossacks. They only haven't done it to us, as if we soldiers really didn't deserve anything."

In the political trials soldiers rarely figure. Yet,

in 1882, took place the trial of the soldiers (fifteen in all) of the fortress of Peter and Paul, accused of holding communication with the political prisoners, and rendering them help. The judicial inquiry proved that certain of the accused "look upon the Tzar as the cause of all evils, and are waiting for a rising." In an interesting correspondence in *The Will of the People*, there is a discussion among soldiers at St. Petersburg, after March 1st-13th, as to what they would have done had an insurrection broken out. Some were of opinion that they ought to go over to the insurgents ; others preferred waiting to see who got the upper hand. In short, the mental condition of the army is of a kind by no means pleasant for the Government. But what is still more dangerous for it, and denotes a considerable advance in things revolutionary, is the propagation of the movement among the officers. It is a characteristic phenomenon that a large number of men educated in the military schools have always taken part in the revolutionary movement. Such were, e.g., Kravtchinsky, Rogatchev, Oussatchev, and others, who in 1874 were prosecuted for propaganda. Only formerly, the officers, as they became revolutionists, generally gave up their position, and went away to the people, or took their share in the civil plots. But of late years, in consequence of the spreading of the idea that for Russia a political *coup d'Etat* is the first essential, the position of things has changed. The military men stay in the army and make propaganda among their comrades, among their soldiers. The idea of a military plot is in the air. Societies are coming

into existence whose very name—the Militarists—denotes their nature.

The military organization of *The Will of the People*, which, as the political trials have shown, had a very strong central body and many branches in the army, has acquired a much greater renown. The Government was greatly exercised at the discovery of this conspiracy, in which were involved, as the inquiry showed, officers of high ability, such as Colonel Achenbrenner; lieutenants in the navy, Soukhanov and Stromberg; Pokitonov, lieutenant of artillery, and others. The trial at St. Petersburg in September, 1884, involved scarcely any one but military men. The condemned officers were among the best in the army. The cavalry captain, Tikhotsky, transported to Siberia by administrative measure, was personally known to the emperor for his brilliant feats of arms in the last campaign with Turkey. Soukhanov, shot for taking part in the regicide, was looked upon as one of the most able engineers in the navy. Lieutenant-Colonel Achenbrenner, condemned to hard labour, and shot a month later, was highly esteemed by his chiefs. He had won every grade in his successive positions on the battle-field. He was decorated with the Order of St. Ann of the fourth degree, for valour; with the Order of St. Ann of the third degree, with swords and knot; with the Order of Stanislas of the second degree, with swords; with that of Stanislas of the third degree, and of St. Ann of the second. He had received the medal for the war of 1877-8. Captain Pokitonov, condemned to hard labour, had done exceptionally well at the Academy of Artillery.

lery, and, as early as twenty-seven years of age, had received the Order of St. Ann of the third degree, with swords and knot; the Order of Stanislas of the second degree, with swords; the Order of Vladimir of the fourth degree, with swords and knot. He had the medal for the war with Turkey, and the insignia of the Iron Cross of Roumania. I need dwell no longer on these symbols of military distinction, by which the Government itself had recognised the abilities and the deserts of the officers hostile to it. I will only say that we often find among the revolutionists that belong to the army the same enthusiasm, the same devotion to the cause, as elsewhere. Lieutenant Baron Stromberg, member of the military organization, gave to it all his fortune; the unexampled self-denial of Soukhanov has given birth to legend on legend in the army, and the memory of the founder of the revolutionary military organization is held in profound veneration in Russian regiments.

Clearly nothing is so dangerous to the Government as this movement of revolution in the army, accompanied as it is by military plots. Hence it treats the military men with inflexible rigour. It hanged the officers Doubrovine, Rogatchev, Stromberg, and shot Soukhanov and Achenbrenner. Dreading lest trials reveal the danger threatening it, the Government avoids indictments before courts. It acts with redoubled sternness in its administrative penalties. It spies with so much the more vigilance upon the army. The Minister of War, by a circular letter, which, secret as it was supposed to be, is known through the medium of certain copies, recommended

the chiefs of regiments to so regulate the life of the officers that they should have the least possible spare time, and not to allow the officers to have intercourse with civilians, especially not with students. If an officer is under the slightest suspicion of any political want of faith, he must be expelled the service, without any reason being given; but the governor is to be at once informed of it, so that he may put the suspect under secret surveillance. At the same time the Government is making some sort of attempt to improve the officers' position; but thus far it has only been able to take steps of the most insignificant kind. The salary in certain grades has been raised slightly; and for the officers, as a body, there has been a reduction in the price of theatre and railway tickets.

Time will show whether the efforts of the Government to annul the revolutionary movement will be crowned with more success in the army than they have been elsewhere.

CHAPTER III.

The black partition.—The agrarian question.—Anti-Semitic riots.
—Agrarian crimes.

HE that bears in mind the character of the people as I have painted them, will assuredly not expect in them any conscious political movement.

It is true that there are, besides the artisans of the towns, some sections of the people more or less developed, more capable than others of placing before them a definite political aim. The Cossacks and the Sectaries are instances. But the sects as yet only concern themselves with morality, or with social reforms, and but rarely touch on political matters. As to the Cossacks, their influence on the people, once on a time very great, has become extremely weak, partly because of their too privileged position, partly because the Government employs them by preference as policemen, and this, of course, gives a thousand pretexts for popular dislike. This fact largely diminishes the effect of the movements that are noticeable among the Cossacks —movements that formerly would have been a contagion throughout Russia. In point of fact, as one result of the Government habit of stifling, little by little, the freedom of the Cossacks, there occur

among the latter now and again movements of a much more conscious nature than among the peasants. Of this kind was the insurrection, eight years ago, of the Oural Cossacks, an insurrection put down without pity. As punishment, almost the whole of the male population of military age were transported to Turkestan, and have only recently received permission to return to their own land. Two years back the Don Cossacks addressed to the Government a remarkable petition, in which they asked that nomination to all civil functions in the army should be shared in by the men elected by the people, and that the whole of the economic administration should be placed in the hands of these representatives. The petition aimed at investing this assembly with especial consideration, by asking that in its meeting-place there should be exhibited all the symbols and all the imperial edicts that have at any time confirmed the liberties of the Cossacks.¹ These aspirations of the Cossacks so disturbed the Government, that it disarmed them, transferred the arsenals of the Don elsewhere, gave no more cannon to their armies, and so on. To such an extent do the Cossacks distinguish their cause from the general cause of the peasants, and stand upon a ground special to themselves, that they cannot, and even would not, draw after them the mass of the people, and are in no sense the representatives of these as in the days of Razine and Pougatchev. But if just now this rôle of the Cossack does not exist, it is by no means inadmissible as a possibility. The Government, by the

¹ *Messenger of the Will of the People*, No. 3.

course it pursues, is rending the Cossacks asunder into two classes,—one of which, the lower, is continually being restricted as to its rights and injured as to its interests. It would seem from this that they will be forced into a new relation with the peasants. Examples of this have been more than once noted in these later times. But should the lower class of Cossacks, if only for the defence of their own personal interests, join with the peasants, this might have an immense influence in politics, seeing that the Cossacks have strong republican political traditions, and that the people are in the habit of setting great store by the Cossacks' opinions. To bear all this in mind is essential in thinking of the eventualities that may or may not occur.

If we do not go beyond existing facts,—if we ask ourselves, not what may happen, but what is,—then, assuredly, it must be owned that in the mass of the Russian people, a certain number of artisans excepted, there is no political movement at all. The peasants are discontented, are uneasy; but they have no programme, and are not a party with definite demands. Given this condition of things, is there yet need to inquire into the state of mind of the mass of the population, when speaking of Russia from the point of view of politics? In my opinion, only an affirmative answer is possible. In point of fact, if political programmes give birth to popular movements, they are also the offspring of these. There is an intrinsic logic in social fact that men may long fail to notice, but that nevertheless forces them to act exactly as they would have acted in obedience to an actual programme. In

this sense, the movements of the Russian peasants are very dangerous to the present *régime*.

At first sight the peasants' discontent and protests may seem partial, and directed against isolated facts and persons. But look a little more closely, and you will see that these particular cases against which the people are entering protests, are exactly those in which the general policy of the Government comes out most clearly. The contradiction between the leanings of populace and Government is to-day at least as evident as in the times of serfdom. The Russian peasants, who remained calm for some years at the time of the emancipation, began their agitation again when the agrarian regulations came into force. They were discontented with the re-partition of the land, which, as I have said already, had really been carried out not at all fairly. This agitation, however, although it extended over many provinces, and even necessitated at times armed repression, did not become a general insurrection, because of the habitual illusions of the peasants. They hoped the reform of 1861 was only to be the Tzar's first step, and that he would soon set to work to solve the agrarian question. Persistent reports in this connection have been spread, and are yet being spread, in all directions,—reports that more than once even settled the term of the commencement of the "black partition."¹

¹ This phrase, which seems enigmatic to M. Leroy-Beaulieu, is really quite clear. For centuries the word "black" has been used by Russians to designate the masses. So that there have been peasants of the black plough, the black tax,—*i.e.*, capitation tax,—and there are even now the black people, *tcherni plebs*.

The "black partition" means the general sharing of land among all Russians without exception. According to the peasants' ideas, the land ought to be shared among all. It is not a measure of a class in view of the interest of that class alone—it is a national measure. A gentleman, in the confidence of the peasants, hearing it said that the land ought to be taken from the nobles, asked, "Then it will be taken from me as well?" "How much land have you?" asked the peasant. "Six déciatines." "Then you need not disturb yourself; you'll have another three given you."

So positive are the rumours as to the land partition, that the peasants even calculate how much each will have: sometimes seven déciatines are spoken of, sometimes fifteen. So firm is the belief of everyone in the partition, in the levelling up, that by reason of it the peasants often abstain from buying land. The eminent legal authority, Iakouchkine, tells how rich peasants of his acquaintance would come to him and ask if there was not risk in buying land. "A nice piece has come in our way," they said, "and not dear. But we are in doubt." "Why?" asked Iakouchkine. "Supposing that the partition comes, and it is taken away from us again? It's just to consult you on that we've come. What rumours are abroad? Will it be soon or not? Is it worth while buying?"¹ No efforts of the Government can put an end to these hopes of a fresh increase of land, or even of the black partition. Every one is expecting the latter; a small number of rich koulaks are trying to sub-

¹ "Common Law": Preface.

stitute for it increase of general holdings at the expense of the lands of the gentry and of the State. The Government rejects both proposals, but no one believes these denials. When he was Minister of the Interior, Makov issued a circular in which he gave the lie categorically to all these rumours. This circular was stuck up in all the village mairies; it was read in the churches. Some years later Makov, compromised in some bribery affair, committed suicide. Then the report ran round among the peasants that he had killed himself on account of his circular. "He wrote it," said the peasants, "unknown to the Tzar. For a long time the Tzar knew nothing of it; then, when he did learn, his anger was terrible. Makov was afraid, and committed suicide."

The people were not even shaken in their belief by the personal declarations of the Tzar. On the day of his coronation, Alexander II. made a declaration of this kind. His final speech was listened to by 800 village mayors. It was sent out into all the villages by the hundred thousand. And yet in a large number of places the peasants said all the same, "that the mayors had doubtless heard incorrectly." They do not believe the actual words of the Tzar, but prefer their own legends. "It was night,"—a tourist is telling the tale,—"we were going along the bank of a river, deep and still. On the farther bank were the forests of the splendid estate of N. N. For a long time the postilion looked at this wonderful picture, bathed in the clear light of the moon. 'See, sir!' he broke out on a sudden, 'all this will soon belong to us, and that,'—he

pointed with his hand,—‘and that.’” He was speaking of the partition. The tourist reminded him that the Government itself gave the lie to these rumours. “Not at all, sir,” said the postilion, with the air of a man convinced; “we know it for certain. The Tzar himself went by here one day, and our people went to ask him about the land. ‘Wait, my children,’ said he to them; ‘we can’t do everything at once. But patience! Everything shall be made fair and level soon. You see this river—fair and level as it.’” In dreams such as these the people are lulled to sleep, and the years flow on, bringing with them nothing but new burdens. Taxes unbridled, despotism of the administration, want of land, the misery of being at the mercy of every koulak who has a few pounds, how little is all this in harmony with the splendid dreams of true liberty! The discontent is beginning to grow serious. The peasants, weary of suffering, send to the Tzar petitioners with complaints and requests. But these petitioners very seldom even reach the Tzar. Before this happens they are garrotted or thrown into prison. Even if they get to Court, the result is no better. They are not so much as received. In Russia the sending a petition is almost a revolt, and at all events a case of sedition. Instead of encouraging this action of the peasants, itself an evident proof of their trust in them, the Tzars themselves order these peasant delegates into transportation.

As some sort of defence of the Government, it must, however, be said that the situation of the Tzars, and of the administration generally, is fre-

quently very embarrassing. Sometimes the peasants are wholly in the right, even from the legal point of view. The landed proprietors and the capitalists, taking advantage of their ignorance, make the most dishonest contracts with them; the peasants put their crosses, know nothing as to what they are signing, and thus fall into a real slavery. Often the landed proprietors and other rich people get hold of the peasants' lands by methods that are mere cheating. The men in authority are bribed shockingly, and sometimes levy illegal taxes on their own account. The story is told, that somewhere in Siberia, a stanovoï, in league with a secretary of some village mairie, levied on the peasants a tax to pay, as he put it, for a gold coat for the heir-apparent, who was going to be married. In this case the Government had a chance ready to hand of gaining the people's confidence without going outside the law. If the peasants cannot get their rights even in cases like this, have we not proof formal of the disorganization and moral decadence of the Government? On other occasions the peasants, from a legal point of view, are in the wrong, whilst from their own, they consider they are absolutely within their rights, and are terribly wroth when accused. Here is a recent fact of this kind. Some years ago, not far from the town of Ieisk, on lands belonging to the Cossack army of Kouban, the peasants had just settled. An immense tract, the property of the army, stretched out hard by Ieisk, and no one tried to make anything of it. Only from time to time herds of half-wild horses came to browse on it; for the steppe was let out to some

speculators who bred herds of horses there. At first, the administration of the army paid no attention to certain families newly established there, although they had no right to occupy the land of the Cossacks.¹ But the number of immigrants grew rapidly; they came in crowds. At the end of some years an enormous straggling village had grown up in the middle of the steppe, had encroached upon a whole territory, and contained already more than 5,000 inhabitants. Its name was very characteristic —Dournosiolovka (established without paying anything). Taking possession of land in this way is one of the customs of this people. If the land is unoccupied, that means to them that the worker can occupy it. In the south of Russia, these arbitrary occupyings were the origin of many populous towns. Lately the town of Rostov gained in this way a complete new *arrondissement*. The immigrants simply, without asking permission of any one, without paying the town a penny, built whole streets, and two or three years later the municipality were astonished to learn that the town had grown to the extent of a new *arrondissement* occupied by several thousand inhabitants, who paid no tax, were answerable to no authority. As to Dournosiolovka, the Cossacks were by no means inclined to give up their territories. The Cossack administration pleaded, complained. Assuredly the inhabitants of Dournosiolovka were in the wrong; they were condemned to clear out from the land. But the doing this meant the demolition of a whole village, made

¹ As to the speculators, they were even content, for the peasants paid them a small sum for the land.

up of many hundreds of dvors, and the ruin of a thousand families, just to return this land to the Cossacks, who made no use of it. The peasants could not look upon this decision as one of equity. They regarded themselves as oppressed ; and when the attempt was made by the administration to expel them by force, they opposed this by main force. Thus a veritable outbreak occurred. The peasants, foreseeing trouble,—for the Russian administration, when once disorder, which it has done nothing to prevent, breaks out, puts this down Tartar-fashion,—sent a petitioner to the Tzar to complain and to ask help. After many fruitless attempts, the unfortunate messenger managed to get to the Tzar's palace. A friend of his, a soldier, let him into a garden in which the Tzar and his family were coming to walk. The peasant, in mortal dread of the nobles that surrounded the Tzar, hid behind a bush. Then, when at length Alexander III., with the empress and their son, did appear, the peasant sprang out on a sudden from his hiding-place and fell on his knees, holding out the petition to the Tzar. The effect of this unexpected scene can be imagined. The empress fainted away. The escort rushed upon the supposed nihilist, rained blows upon him, and placed him under arrest. The matter, however, was soon cleared up, to the confusion of all and sundry. The emperor was naturally anxious to efface the impression produced on the peasant by this scene of consternation. He sent for him, gave him audience, and ordered an inquiry into the matter. For a while the peasants had the best of it. But all that the inquiry could do was to

reveal what had happened, *i.e.*, the seizing by the peasants of land that did not belong to them, and then their resistance of the authorities by force. The whilom petitioner, as promoter of all this, was adjudged the chief offender, and thrown into prison. Dournosiolovka was destroyed. See what a great gulf there is fixed between the law and the popular idea! The peasants were, however, unwilling to yield to violence,—and they looked on all this as violence,—and only by aid of the military, who surrounded the village and starved it out, was the decision of the court carried out. Now where but lately stood a busy village, over the charred ruins of homes, the wind of the steppes sweeps free; and the bats, lurking in the chimneys, are the sole dwellers in this abomination of desolation. This story is only hinted at very vaguely in the Russian press, with the exception of the last number of the *Narodnaia Volia*. My account differs, however, to some extent from the one given there. I believe the information on which mine is based to be quite correct.

It is necessary never to lose sight of this aspect of the agrarian question, in studying the peasant outbreaks. Their land theories, and those of the law, are in complete divergence. In the everyday language of the peasants, even down to the present time, the word "sell," as applied to the land, is synonymous with "let." They say, "I have sold it for ten years." The idea of agrarian property never enters the mind of the peasant. That of the right of him that tills the land to enjoy it is, on the contrary, very strong. "What an ass our Govern-

ment is ! Why doesn't it give us the land ? Look what a lot of it is uncultivated with X, with Y, with Z (and he names the local gentry). And I haven't a lot belonging to me. I can't understand why they put up with all this. Is it possible the Government doesn't understand that I have need of the land ? " Thus spoke a retired policeman whom I knew, a man who has never in his life heard any subversive propaganda. How could the Government satisfy demands based on ideas of this kind without producing a general disturbance in agrarian affairs ? The nationalization of the soil is the only thing that will appease the peasants and inaugurate an equitable order of things from their point of view.

A really great Government alone could calm and satisfy this people—a Government not afraid of strong measures, understanding the national life and the position of its country, and not troubling itself as to whether in Europe or in Asia there has ever been done that which ought to have been done, that which can easily be decreed in Russia to-day. The Government actually is assuredly miles away from these subversive ideas. We have already seen that it works against them. Certain paltry half-measures, intended to secure the possession of the soil to the peasants, are only taken when the latter begin to rise in revolt, and the revolutionists make use of the indifference of the Government to the people as a means of agitation.

This collision between the tendencies of the people and of the Government would render the maintenance of order impossible, even in cases

where the Government only wished to maintain the existing law, and not to subjugate the people to despotism. But we have seen the position of the Government, and in what fashion despotism, everywhere and in all directions, infringes the law. The peasant's situation is becoming absolutely insupportable. He is very patient. For a long time he believes that the hour for the triumph of justice may come at any moment. But the time passes, and things only grow worse. Then disorders, more and more pronounced in their nature, begin. At times it is difficult to see in these outbreaks any aim, any meaning at all. There is only to be seen in them weariness of this condition that can be borne no longer—only to be seen the reaction of a morbid sensitiveness to any stimulus. A seditious state of mind results, leading to outbursts the most unexpected, the most inexplicable. The very day of the coronation of the present emperor, disturbances broke out in different places in Russia. Apparently they had no immediate cause, unless it was that large bodies of police had been removed from various localities to Moscow for the protection of the Tzar.

At St. Petersburg, the crowd, excited by drink, took it into their heads to assault the nobility. Spontaneously, as it were, the idea spread through the city. The disturbances were simply scandalous. Labouring men took away their hats from people decently dressed, made them shout "Hurrah!" and tried to beat them. The police interfered on behalf of the assaulted ones. This only excited the crowd the more. One commissary of police was so

knocked about that some days later he died. The prefect of police himself, Gresser, was beaten, and only escaped from the mob by flight. At Odessa, the people were not satisfied with the feast provided for them on the coronation-day. They set to work and staved in the barrels; beer and kvass inundated the place. The police tried to stop these untimely demonstrations. Matters grew worse. The mob came into collision with the Cossacks; many on both sides were wounded; it was said even that some were killed. At Oufa, the crowd, drunken with wine, also set about assaulting the nobles. At Sterlitamak it broke into a club where a banquet in honour of the coronation was going on, drove out the banqueters, and itself devoured the dinner. At Rostov, on the occasion of the coronation, anti-Semitic disturbances broke out. In these, the mob sacked many houses that belonged to the Christians. Then they tried to storm the prison, probably with the intention of freeing the prisoners. Thereupon an actual fight broke out between the mob and the military, who had surrounded the prison on all sides. The people were vanquished and dispersed.

In a large proportion of these cases, it is useless to ask what was the cause of the outbreak. The latter is but a reflex action,—with for stimulus years of suffering, abuse, humiliation,—breaking out on the merest and most accidental pretext. Take, for example, what happened in 1882 at St. Petersburg. A policeman was taking a hack-driver to the station-house for the infringement of some regulation or other. I think it was because the driver was standing near his horse (by regulation he ought to be

sitting on the box). The driver, afraid of losing his day's work, and of perhaps having to pay a fine, was in despair, and almost in tears begged the policeman to let him off. At this scene a crowd gradually gathered around the men. On a sudden they began to insult the policeman ; then, aroused to anger, they stopped him, threatened him, insisted on his letting the driver go. So furious was the crowd, that the policeman and his fellows who ran to his assistance, thought it wisest to liberate their prisoner. The working men carried off the driver in triumph, shouting "Hurrah ! we have freed him !" and, jubilant, they scattered in every direction.

Nearly at the same time, at Moscow, on Loubianskaïa Place, a tramway car was upset, and injured a working man who was passing. In a moment a crowd gathered, and began assaulting the conductor. A policeman interfered ; the crowd grew more and more excited. Threats and cries broke out. "Get out of the way, you only want to bully the people." Seeing the danger, the policeman and the tram conductor ran to a carriage hard by, and barricaded themselves in. The crowd was only dispersed by the police.

At Klimov (government of Tchernigov) the mob worked itself up into a passion over a quarrel between a shopkeeper and a working-man customer, both Russians, and sacked the shops ; not only the one belonging to the particular shopkeeper, but every one that they found open. "Brothers," cried the shopkeepers, "aren't you ashamed to ill-use your own people, the orthodox believers ?" "It's all the same to us," cried one of the crowd. "Come along,

give us some Jews. The old believers are worse even than Jews." Probably the shopkeepers belonged to the sect of old believers. This malicious condition of mind in men, as ready to make rebellion as a child to kick the stone that hurts him, without thinking whether it has sensation or not, is in a measure reflected in the anti-Semitic disturbances. I say in a measure, for these are a very complex effect, begotten of many diverse causes.

In those countries where anti-Semitic disturbances are most common, the Jews make up the majority of the most implacable exploiters of men. Moreover, their treatment of the people is irritating beyond all conception, and of inconceivable brutality. The peasants' contempt of them is audible in every word. When, after the earlier disturbances, the military that had suppressed them beat the people cruelly with whips, the Jews could not keep from jeering at the peasants. "Ah! are the whips nice? Will you beat Jews again?" Of course all the Jews are not exploiters; of course there are among them men of honesty. But when the people see that seventy-five or even ninety per cent. of those that devour them are Jews, they soon look upon these as all in the same boat, especially when traditional religious superstitions and fanaticism lend their evil support. As result of all this, anti-Semitic disturbances used to break out from time to time in Russia also. Ever since 1881 they have taken on the character of a huge outbreak, and have occurred yearly. Each year the mob has sacked the houses, destroyed and pillaged the domains of the Jews, even going to the length of massacre and violence of the most

revolting kind. In 1881 these disturbances took place at Elisavetgrade, Golta, Znamenka, Kiev, Kicheniev, Vassilkov, Jmérinka, Fastov, Nicolaiev, Odessa, Smiéla, Lozovaïa, Romny, Volotchisk, Biér-iozovka, Pierieiaslav, Niejin, Loubny, Borzna. The disorder spread as far as Poland, and broke out in a violent form in Warsaw. Next year it began again at Balta, Doubossary, Lietychev, Miedjibojie, Nouvelle-Prague, Bereznovatovka, Vissounka, Piriatin, Okny. In 1883 there were terrible anti-Semitic riots at Rostov, Novomoskovsk, Ekatérinoslav, Krivoï-Rog, Kharkov, producing most unexpected consequences at the Russian court of Nijni-Novgorod, where there are scarcely any Jews. Next year the disturbances grew less, without wholly ceasing. Since then they seem to have become transformed into agrarian crimes. Of these I shall speak directly.

The popular outburst of anger, manifested in anti-Semitic riots, chose this particular form under the influence of circumstances that admit of categorical statement. "Jew and noble are alike," says a working man; "only it is easier to beat the Jew, and that's why he is more often beaten." Why is it more easy to beat the Jews? The responsibility for this rests wholly on Count Ighnatiev's ministry, formed by the Tzar in 1881. This ministry, frightened by the events of the 1-13 of March, seeing all over Russia a condition of high nervous tension, thought it might distract the attention that society and the people had fixed upon politics by reawakening the national sentiment. "We owe all our misfortunes to the foreigners. The Russian must

be restored to his proper position." The ministry, with much vociferation, spread abroad these ideas. In a large number of journals that are always inspired by the Government, a multitude of articles appeared against all foreigners, and especially against the Jews. So noisy were these clamourings, that among the people the report spread far and wide, and very deep, that the Government had decreed the hunting down and exterminating of the Jews. This was the sense of the general commentary in the Ukraine upon that manifesto in which the Tzar spoke of the very urgent necessity of "ridding the country of rioters and of rapine." "Rapine!" said the Little Russians one to another. "But who practises that, if it isn't the Jews? As to rioters (*kramolniks*), that's clearer still. They're the shopkeepers (*kramorniks*); that is to say, the Jews again." The Little Russians do not understand the old word "*kramolnik*." The rival robbers to the Jews in some places took advantage of this popular feeling. They stirred up the people, with the two-fold object of getting rid of their competitors and of diverting the attention of the people from themselves.

The policy of Count Ighnatiev in the higher circles had its effect everywhere. Once given the popular hatred of the Jews, and this policy was bound to succeed. Disturbance began, and what happened? In the very first trial of the ringleaders of the riot at Kiev, *procureur* Strielnikov, known as one in the full confidence of the Tzar, intrusted directly after this with the repression of the revolutionary movement in the South, with the powers of

a dictator—Strielnikov, who was looked upon as representing the policy of the Government, instead of accusing, seemed the rather to defend those who had ill-treated the Jews. The *procureur* deplored at the top of his voice in open court the exploitation by the Jews, the unbearable condition of the people. All that he said was printed and commented on. A Jewish deputation waited on Count Ighnatiev, imploring help against the repeated attacks of the mob. The Count made answer that the western frontier of Russia was open to the Jews. Governor-General Drenteln, when the deputation was presented to him, began to insult it, to reproach it with its robberies. He said it was useless for the Jews to try and gain over influential personages in St. Petersburg. "They will take your money there," he said; "but they will do nothing for you." All utterances such as these were published in the newspapers, and circulated by thousands throughout Russia. What could the people help but think as to the intentions of the Government?

It would have been interesting to see what the ministry would have done had the anti-Semitic movement taken on a purely national and religious character, and thus turned popular attention from political to social questions. But this experiment was not to be.

The peasantry, excited by the movement, sacking the houses of the Jews, cried aloud from the outset, "It is our blood they have drained." They did not think of Jesus as crucified by the Jews, but of themselves. From the very beginning they said, "We'll begin by hunting out the Jews, after them the

nobles; then the priests shall have their deserts, too." The social character of the movement became in its turn prominent; and this frightened the very people who had set it going, or at all events had regarded it with pleasure. The reactionary organs began to cry out that the anti-Semitic disorders were the doing of the socialists, were a school in which the populace was educating itself for revolution. Then the Government put down the disturbances with an extreme severity. In the South and at Warsaw, in six months 6,826 rioters were arrested, and 5,161 of these were tried. Cases of this kind were adjudicated, by order of the emperor, without waiting for their turn, and the *procureurs* called the attention of the jurors to this decree as proof that the Government demanded special severity in their verdicts. Everywhere Cossack whips whistled about the rebellious people; everywhere gunshots were heard.

The anti-Semitic movement calmed down; but it may be doubted whether these reprisals had really stifled it, for with the lessening of the Jewish persecution, the agrarian movement renewed its strength. It is far more likely that the popular risings followed in all this the intrinsic law of their own development, as laid down in the formula: "We'll begin by hunting out the Jews, after them the nobles, then the priests shall have their deserts too."

I said above, that the risings and inarticulate protests of the peasants increased during the period immediately following the emancipation of the serfs. The peasants, as if in despair of finding succour from the legally appointed authorities, began more

and more frequently to take the law into their own hands. This is shown, *e.g.*, by the arson of the wheat and oats of the landed proprietors and of the rich koulaks, the assassination of guards and keepers, and so forth. The red cock (fire) was flying all through Russia. About the beginning of the reign of Alexander III., this movement was particularly strong. It took the shape of a storm of revolts that were at the outset anti-Semitic. Since that time the coronation of Alexander III. seems to have given a new stimulus to the movement.

At the time of the coronation, the emperor, who had summoned to it 800 representatives of the peasantry, was unwise enough to receive them in no very hospitable fashion. Some of the mayors who had been summoned to the ceremony, told afterwards, with indignation, how they had been thrust like a herd into the first barracks that came, without any attempt even to provide them with food. Trusting to the emperor's hospitality, they had not taken the precaution to bring any money. In several cases they had to get assistance from their compatriots, presidents of chambers of the zemstvo, who had also come to the coronation. Some time after, certain of these presidents presented to the zemstvo official accounts of the sums they had disbursed for the maintenance of the mayors. Moreover, the mayors were not less discontented with the conduct of the courtiers to them. When they were presented to the Tzar, they could hear coming from the crowd of courtiers mocking phrases : "Look at that! That's Russia!" The contemptuous tone was not lost on them. Finally, after the coronation,

at the festival in honour of the mayors, the emperor himself filled the cup to overflowing. The scene was a strange one, wholly incomprehensible to the monarch. Representatives of the nobility were among the guests. The emperor addressed in turn the nobles and the peasantry, uttering two discourses, whose special aim seemed to be to throw into relief his predilection for the nobility. To the peasants he said : " I am very glad to see you once again. I thank you with all my heart for your cordial participation in those solemnities of ours in which the whole of Russia has taken so deep an interest. When you return to the bosom of your families, express to every one my gratitude to them all ; follow the counsels and direction of the nobility, your leaders, and give no credence to the absurd and nonsensical reports as to partition of the land, free enlargement of holdings, and so forth. These rumours are spread abroad by our enemies. All property, just like your own, must remain inviolable. May God grant you health and happiness ! "

Then the emperor addressed the nobles. " Thank you for your fidelity. I have always had the utmost confidence in the sincerity of my nobility, and I fervently hope that it will always be, as it always has been, the bulwark of the throne and of the fatherland. God grant all calm and peace to you ! I thank you with all my heart."

For the peasants, then, nothing but upbraiding and orders of obedience to the nobles. It is not even thought necessary to thank them for their fidelity. They are thanked, like so many strangers, for their participation in the ceremonies of the coro-

nation. On the other hand, the nobles are the bulwark of the throne and of the fatherland, and in them the Tzar has always had the utmost confidence. It is difficult to understand why the sovereign addressed the people in words wounding in themselves and of very doubtful service to the nobility, whose existence depends on the popular belief in the Tzar.

Many peasants, as I said, cannot believe that the Tzar really did speak thus. But as the speeches were made in the presence of eight hundred peasant witnesses, a large number do believe in them. Further, at the coronation, the peasants expected God knows what granting of favours, and of course their well-beloved "partition of the land." In point of fact, the Tzar loaded the nobles alone with favours. All he gave to the peasants was the reduction of the capitation tax, the complete removal of which had been decided upon a year before. Why did the emperor not take advantage of his coronation and grant the people this coronation present at least?

Conduct so incredible will assuredly perplex hugely the future historian of our time. But it is certain that its effect was increased uneasiness among the peasants. Throughout government after government, the populace were agitated at hearing the rumour that the Tzar intended to restore serfdom. It must be noted that these rumours were current as early as March 1-13, 1881; an evidence of the extent to which the popular belief in the authority of the Tzar was shaken. The reports and pieces of gossip among the populace at the time of Alexander II.'s death were very strange.

In one place the mob were for avenging any insult to the Tzar; in another they insulted him themselves. I have already pointed out how much more marked this hostility became after the 1-13 of March. As a rule, what was said was, "He's only got what he deserved." Often, again, the people explained the Tzar's death as a chastisement of God for his sins. Thus, at St. Petersburg, a *concierge* said to me, "It's because when he'd only just buried one wife he married another" (Princess Iourievskaïa). One of the old believers explained at length in a railway car, that God permitted the attempts on the life of the Tzar "in the hope that he would mend his ways." In the government of Kiev, the legend ran thus : "He is fired at once ; God saves him. He is fired at a second time ; God saves him again. The same thing happens a third time. Then God calls together St. Nicolas and the rest of them, and says, 'What am I to do with the Tzar ? He won't take care of himself. I think he must treat his folk badly since they keep shooting at him. If he doesn't look sharp and repent, I shan't help him any more. Let 'em kill him.'" In the government of Voronéj, according to one traveller, reports as to the Tzar's death vary. Some say, the nobles killed him. Others are in doubt. "Perhaps it was to avenge us !" The idea is even prevalent that the Tzar was killed by the "students, the peasants' friends." At a meeting of sectaries, one of them proclaimed the murder of the antichrist Tzar as a deed of the highest worth. If, said he, the revolutionists are not strong enough to strike antichrist a second time in the person of Alexander III., the Christians ought

to take upon themselves this holy mission. The meeting negatived his proposal, but listened to the very end of this violent harangue. In a word, no particular sympathy for the Tzar is to be found among the people, and the general opinion was very accurately expressed by an old village dame. A passer-by asked her; "Mother, why don't you go to church for the emperor's funeral mass? Aren't you sorry for him?" "Why should I be sorry for him?" the woman answered. "That one's dead and we've got another already. We've enough to do with our own troubles."

The Emperor Alexander III., although he came to the throne under conditions such as these, made no effort to restore the popularity of the Tzars. He did not a little to destroy the last vestiges of it. Whether as result of the Tzar's speeches or not, the agitation increased and increased. It was dealt with rigorously. One of the most terrible repressions, which ruined the huge volost of Vilchana occurred almost on the day of the coronation. Set upon and beaten by the soldiers, the peasants avenged themselves by setting fire to fields and buildings. "Fires are becoming *à la mode*," some one writes to the papers from Kichiniov. "The peculiarity," we read in another place, "about the fires at Zolotchev, is, that the domains of the rich are being destroyed. . . . The property set on fire is that of people hated for their oppression of the poor." In the Dmitriev district, the fires that wasted the possessions of the landowners are explained as due to the ill-will of the populace. The same news comes from Rylsk, Slavianoserbsk, and elsewhere. Many

details of the like nature are to be found in the Russian newspapers. But fires are the least violent expression of the popular wrath. Actual attacks on the landlords are not infrequent, and in some places these attacks lead to a panic so great that they run away from their domains. This was the case in the provinces of Piriatin, Vierkhnednieprovsk, Sosnitsa, and others. This particular phase of the movement reached its acute stage in the southern governments, which were also the chief seat of the anti-Semitic outbreak. In the province of Novomoskovsk, the movement against the Jews appeared simultaneously with attacks upon landed proprietors. In September, 1883, the peasants came to one of the landowners and asked him to give up his estates to them for nothing. "The soil needs us," said they; "we have scarcely anything to till. Taxes swarm; we have nothing to pay them with, and we ourselves are in need of bread." These did not appear to be very convincing reasons as far as the landowner was concerned. He hurried off to give notice to the ispravnik. This official, when he reached the village, told the peasants their demands were illegal, and reminded them of the words of the emperor on the coronation day. "It's not true," roared the peasants. "The mayors didn't understand him." Then they begged the ispravnik to manage for them, or to set about getting for them, an increase of holding. As their prayers remained unanswered, the peasants began to make disturbances in different parts of the province. They carried off the proprietors' cattle, their agricultural implements, the harvest stored in their barns; they

tilled the proprietors' lands. It is said that one owner got frightened and signed a deed, by virtue of which he gave up his lands. This movement was crushed by the governor of the province by means of armed force.

That which took place in the government of Oufa was not less characteristic. The nobility of this government were even compelled to appeal to the emperor in 1883, begging him "to take measures for the restoration of order in the government of Oufa, and for the defence of the agrarian rights of the nobles against the violence that was growing day by day."¹ I take several facts from this curious document. In the spring of 1883, the house of a gentleman named Tcherniavsky, with all the out-buildings, was burnt down. All the people in it, five in number, were killed. The steward disappeared, and no trace of him was to be found. The whole of the harvest of the owner was spirited away from the barns. Not one of the culprits was to be found. Certain peasants who had been serfs of the wife of one Rall, came and told him that they had made up their minds to sequester a portion of his domains, fifty déciatines in area, and that they meant to have it no matter what resistance was made.

As to the estate of one Fok, the bachkirs, his neighbours, came in a crowd, destroyed his forests, killed a number of keepers, and so terrified Fok

¹ Resolution of the assembly of nobles of Oufa, July 27th, 1883. Presented to the Minister of the Interior, and brought by the nobles under the notice of his majesty. See my account in *The Messenger of the Will of the People*, No. 4.

that he ran away from house and lands and set up at Oufa. Prince Tchinghise was actually prevented from visiting his estates by the violence of the people dwelling on them. A mob of peasants made a raid on the fields of the landowner Iermalov, and drove away the men working on them, swearing that they meant holding the land themselves. And, when the steward came, they attacked and wounded him severely with their axes.

Numberless facts of the same nature have been given in evidence by the marshals of the nobility in the provinces of Oufa, Birsk, Sterlitamak, and Bélébéy.

Want of clear political intelligence prevents the people from setting before themselves a definite aim, and therefore prevents organization. The Government, in spite of the terrible outbreaks of popular discontent, prefer as a consequence to reckon with these scattered outbreaks, rather than to allow the formation of a regular peasant party, with a simple programme around which could be grouped forces of considerable extent. But it must be noted that arson and agrarian crime are becoming systematic. The peasants, who are by no means bad organizers, are already forming in certain places regular bands. This was noticeable during the anti-Semitic riots, in which the attacks of the rioters, their military movements, their skill in dispersing just at the right time, to re-form later in some place where there were no police or soldiers,—all gave the impression that the mob were under the direction of some organization. So evident was this, that sometimes the outbreaks were ascribed to the revolutionists;

and, what is still more astonishing, the peasants in some places thought the same. But this idea had to be once for all abandoned, when a number of trials showed conclusively that no sort of revolutionists were concerned in the riots. It is clear that the people are learning to organize themselves; and this became yet more clear as soon as the burning of the property of the landowners took a systematic form. In the province of Slavianoserbsk, in fact, the incendiaries destroyed one after the other the farms belonging to the landowners, and always managed to escape the police. Finally, quite recently these organizations have been made public by judicial investigations. Even a Jew is to be found among the members of a secret society of peasants, the aim of which was, according to the act of accusation, the committing of agrarian outrages; and among the victims of this society Jews and orthodox koulaks alike figure.

This last fact is of great significance. It seems to show that the definite transition of anti-Semitic into agrarian troubles is at hand. Thus, the absolute impossibility of forming peasant parties that can take part in political work is producing among the people the same consequences that it has produced in higher grades of society. The people are organizing into secret societies and resorting to terrorism. But it is certain that this system, practised by a people numbering so many millions, will, if it develops, threaten the public peace with dangers infinitely greater than would be the case if it affected only the cultured class.

CHAPTER IV.

Liberal policy.—The zemstvos.—Coming to power in 1880 of the Liberal party.—Loris Mélikov.—Struggle between the Liberal and Reactionary parties.—The crime of the 13th of March.—Coming to the throne of Alexander III.—His policy.—Secret associations.—Ministry of Count Ighnatiev.—The competent men.—The police.—Ministry of Count Tolstoi.—Preponderating influence of Katkov.

IT is easy to conceive the difficult position of the Liberal party in Russia.

On the one hand, a Government autocratic to the core, jealous as to its authority, and yet unable to give to the country a *régime* that is even tolerable; on the other, revolutionists in utter despair as to any pacific means, and not shrinking from the most extreme measures—terrorism, regicide. Beneath, the mass of the people, wronged, oppressed, humiliated, angered, turning to the most desperate resources—arson, agrarian outrage, riot. What sort of a Liberal programme can be drawn up under such circumstances? In such a country is there even room for Liberals? Does not everything point imperiously to the necessity of no longer tolerating this plague, and of rooting-up, with energetic hand, absolutism, so as to clear the ground for legal and pacific work? Thus many quondam

Liberals think, and they join the ranks of the revolutionists. But the tradition of the revolutionary disturbances, and especially of the conspiracies in Russia, is too recent for the number of those who reason thus to be large.

The Tzar dictatorship, lasting for centuries, lasting throughout the time in which Russia was slowly and with effort attaining her natural limits, was indispensable. Painful as this dictatorship was for all, all understood its necessity. People grew used to the Tzars. The idea of living without the Tzar, of acting against him, *i.e.* of causing disorder, of opposing that centralized authority which was for Russia absolutely necessary—this idea could only arise by degrees, as the state of affairs that had made the Tzars necessary began to disappear. Even now the idea is strange to the mass of the people. That is why society, Liberal, deeply imbued with constitutional ideas as it is, fears to act openly against the Tzar. This fear enabled the autocracy to come out of the crisis that followed upon the Crimean campaign without any practical limitation to its authority. But if the Tzar cannot be antagonized, clearly an attempt must be made to try to come to terms with him. But how? The question is not an easy one.

The Liberal party tried to do something with the fragments of Liberal institutions wrested from Alexander II. They tried to form a political press, an independent judiciary that would have limited the administrative despotism. They tried to work in the zemstvo, in the municipalities. At once the Government assumed the defensive. “Self-govern-

ment" in Russia was from the first organized in the most detestable way. The towns were given over to the power of an industrial and commercial oligarchy. Municipal "self-government" was under the superintendence of a municipal council, elected certainly, but representative of the capital and not of the people. In St. Petersburg, of the total population, 962,000, only 19,233 were electors. These electors again were divided into three classes, according to the amount of taxes paid. In the first class were 261; in the second, 777; in the third, 18,195 voters. Each of these three classes has the same number of representatives on the Municipal Council as either of the others. Hence two-thirds of the voters on that body belong to 1,038 persons, and one-third to 18,195. The rest of the population, at least 800,000, has neither part nor lot in the affairs of the town. What is to be done under an arrangement of such absurdity as this? By virtue of it a large town, with a million inhabitants, is given over to a few thousand people of the financial aristocracy. This is the reason that in Russia many of the smaller towns petition the Government to reduce them to the rank of villages, since in these every inhabitant takes part in the administration of affairs. What can any one who has plans for useful reforms do in a municipality? Besides, are not the Liberal party in power there?

In the zemstvo, the position is somewhat different. The Government—just as in the towns it gives the power to the capitalists—gives here, as I said above, the power to the nobles, and renders the zemstvo powerless by the introduction within it

of class-antagonisms. Fortunately, among the nobles the Liberal party is of considerable magnitude; so that it makes use of the zemstvo in a very hopeful spirit. The Government is careful to surround the zemstvo with conditions of such a nature, that whatever is done is as if one were fighting the air. By law the duty of the zemstvo is limited to defending the economic interests of the locality. Thus the zemstvo has no administrative power, whilst the maintenance of the administration makes a huge hole in its budget. These multitudinous compulsory expenditures upon which the zemstvo has not the right to vote, swallow up half or more than half its resources. The zemstvo of the Tver government, *e.g.* during the sixteen years of its existence, has spent more than twelve millions, and of these more than six millions have gone in compulsory expenses.¹

In the Kherson government, the budget of 1884 shows 364,000 roubles compulsory, and 296,000 non-compulsory, expenses.² From these figures we see under what limitations the zemstvo is placed, even in the disposal of its own revenues. The first thing it must do is to satisfy the demands of the Government, and then, if anything is left, it is at liberty to enter upon non-compulsory expenditure. And non-compulsory expenditure is that for improvements in agriculture, for schools, sanitation, *i.e.* for all that is most indispensable.

Fettered in this fashion in the financial arena, the zemstvo is at the same time under the juris-

¹ "Data for the History of the Tver Zemstvo."

² "Report of the Zemstvo of Kherson, 1884."

diction of the administration. All its decisions are subject to the approval of the governor, who can annul them if he thinks they are illegal or even contrary to the general interests of the State. The governor has even the power of dismissing any of the officials of the zemstvo he thinks not quite sound. The administration has made much use of this irresponsible power. Frequently it acts in the most treacherous way; frequently the only explanation of what it does is a desire to discredit the zemstvo in the eyes of the people.

For example, the zemstvos, anxious to put an end to official corruption, petitioned that those in arrears with their provincial taxes, and the contractors in account with the zemstvos, should not be eligible for public offices. The Government refused. The zemstvos also failed to obtain for their members freedom from arrest at the hands of the inferior police. This the Government refused, although cases had occurred in which the administration had made use of arrests as a means of influencing elections.

In order to bring about participation by the peasants in business matters, the zemstvos asked permission to vote salaries for the deputies. The Government refused. Their petitions as to questions of local interest are invariably rejected. The governors interfere, in despotic fashion, with their business. Thus, in 1877, the Governor of the Tauride forbade a statistical inquiry into the condition of the people. The primary schools of the zemstvos are subject to a control so elaborate and so detailed by the ministry, that the zemstvos are

no longer masters in their own house, and are losing even the wish to do something for the schools.

On the other hand, if the zemstvos are in the mind to speculate, the Government is far more indulgent. It grants them concessions for railroads, for the which they will give guarantees later on. And the Government says nothing when the zemstvo spends its money on the founding asylums for the children of the nobles.

After many years of this, the Liberal party understood with increasing clearness that without limitation of the autocracy on which the administrative despotism is based, it is useless to think of any social activity. Hence the calling together of the representatives of the people, under whatever form, is their dream. An assembly of representatives of the people, even one not vested by the Government with any special powers, would naturally be a moral force that would restrain, even unconsciously, absolutism. To this end all Liberal thinking tends.

The Liberals, therefore, avail themselves of every pretext in order to try and persuade the emperors to call together, either the representatives of the people, or, at least, those of the zemstvos. More than once the zemstvos have taken steps to obtain for their representatives the right to meet in general assemblies, in which they might treat of matters that come within the scope of their work. To begin with, they asked the right of assemblage only for "neighbouring" governments, and they pointed out to the Government that in

case of epidemics or locust plagues in the south of Russia, and the like, general measures taken simultaneously in many governments are indispensable. The more the Liberals tried to bring about these assemblies, the more the Government was afraid to grant them.

The revolutionary movement gave the Liberals a pretext for moving with greater rapidity; but their policy was, as a rule, timid. It lacked sincerity, and thus its attempts were abortive. Instead of demanding the convocation of the representatives of the people and the guaranteeing of the rights of the Russian citizen, as measures absolutely necessary for the country, the Liberals tried to convince the Government that these were measures necessary for the extirpation of sedition, in the real interest of the Government and of the Tzar. They pointed out to it that the police was not in a condition to fight the revolutionary movement with any chance of success, and that the popular representatives would be able to do this with much greater success. One revolutionary journal, *Forward*, said cynically, that the Liberals were begging the Tzar to take them as watchdogs. This sarcasm hit the mark. For the Liberals seemed to say that political liberty, liberty of the press, and so forth, are only needed to exterminate the people who more energetically than all others demand these very things.

This line of action, apart from its wrong-headedness, had the further drawback of revealing the utter weakness of the Liberals, and convincing the Government that they never would dare to enter into open conflict with it. At the same time, it by no manner

of means deceived the Government, who quite understood the close relationship between the ideas of the Liberals and of the Revolutionists. The Government kept its ground, and, not yielding an inch, simply listened to them, and humbugged them, now by this tale, now by that.

So much firmer did the policy of the Government become in this respect, that in the time of Alexander II. it was almost at one with the reactionary party. Count Dmitri Tolstoi, Katkov's friend and pupil, was practically a representative of the *Moscow Gazette* at the cabinet of St. Petersburg. Katkov was constantly denouncing the Liberal intrigues. The Government now and again showed clearly enough that it was by no means taken in. Once it engaged Professor Tsitovitch as editor of *The Precipice*, a journal subsidized by the Government. This journal appeared to be devoted simply to showing that there was no difference between the seditious underground (the Revolutionists) and the seditious above-ground (the Liberals). I do not know to what extent these revelations were of use to the Government. In any case it spent 200,000 roubles on the paper, if my memory serves me;¹ but the money was well spent. This sort of thing is the favourite pastime of the reactionary press; and Katkov's smartest articles are on this theme.

But I have not yet said what the Conservatives or reactionaries are. To speak accurately, it is very difficult to call them Conservatives. They do not

¹ Diakov (pseudonym, Niezlobine), one of Tsitovitch's staff, published in the Russian journals the details, which I have to some extent forgotten.

defend the existing condition of things, but are trying to change it as resolutely as their opponents. Their right name is reactionaries ; they are the antipodes of revolutionists. Whilst the ideal of the latter is a free society of free and cultured men and women, that of the reactionaries is a society hemmed in on all sides by authority, an individual with mind and soul fettered by the prestige of religion, of tradition, and the like. Their ideal is the Russia of Nicolas I. Not very many in number, the reactionaries are so much the more obstinate, as they know they are going, as one of them, Lioubrimov says, against the current. "Against the current" is their true motto. They are opposed, in fact, not only to progressive society as a whole, but to the tendencies of the Russian people. Their strength is in the Government and in the exploiters of the country, who for their shady intrigues need absence of all publicity and an arbitrary despotism.

Generally, one may say, and that without the least prejudice, that Russia's reactionaries are its scourge, not so much on account of their principles —these were conquered long ago in Russia itself—as on account of the men composing their party—men from the dregs of society, the worst elements of all classes. But this very mode of recruiting their forces gives to the reactionaries what the Liberals have not : energy, decision, passion, the readiness to risk everything to gain everything, and in this they remind us of our revolutionists. It is not for nothing that they give asylum to all revolutionary traitors, whose energy they appreciate better than most people.

The second half of the reign of Alexander II. was marked by a yet closer approximation of the Government to the reactionary party. The growth of the revolutionary movement, however, gave the Liberals several new pretexts for making requests of the Government; it even gave them a certain amount of stimulus. The Liberals felt a sense of shame in seeing that whilst their own papers and reviews were growing more and more powerless in face of the administrative despotism, the revolutionists were publishing secretly a whole series of journals; *The Beginning*, *Land of Liberty*, *The Black Dividing up of the Land*, *The Will of the People*, etc. The official declaration of the assembly of the Tver zemstvo, in 1879, in bitterness of spirit complains that "whilst the number of secret organs is incredible, those of the lawful press are compelled, one after the other, to cease to appear." Whilst the revolutionists are organizing their societies and passing sentence of death on high State dignitaries, even on the emperor himself, the Liberals dare not meet for deliberation on the simplest needs of the people, and are forced to submit to the despotism of the most insignificant officer of police.

Under these circumstances, the Liberals begin to discuss their organization as a society. At all events the police reports state that in 1878 the most notable members of the zemstvo held secret meetings at Moscow, Kiev, Khorkov.¹ The same reports speak of a certain Liberal League, which, in concert with the members of the zemstvo, organized in 1880 a secret congress, at which it was resolved that a real

¹ *The General Cause*, No. 54.

representation of the people must be obtained at all costs. These first attempts at union were few and clumsy ; although they were not, perhaps, without effect on the declarations of the zemstvo in favour of a Constitution. These declarations were made in 1879 and 1880, when the emperor, under the pressure of the terrorist movement amongst the revolutionists, stated in public at Moscow to the representatives of the various classes of society, that he believed in the support of his people. This same appeal to society was repeated in the Government *Messenger*. On the one hand, society was smitten ; on the other, its support was asked for. The bitter complaints of the zemstvos made answer like an echo.

The assembly of the Tver zemstvo says, in its official declaration, that it is quite ready to struggle with the growing evil, *i.e.*, with the revolutionists, but that its hands and feet are tied by the administration. The Ministry of Public Instruction denies the zemstvo all share in the education of the people, and yet is not itself in a position to preserve the schools from harmful influences. Each year the secondary schools discharge one-eighth of their pupils before their time is up. These, disinherited thus of their future, form a nucleus for the favourable reception of all subversive ideas. The students are environed by suspicions and constraints that embitter and destroy within them all respect for the law.

So contemptuously is the zemstvo treated by the administration, that not only are its most humble applications left unsatisfied—they are left unanswered. The dignity of the law courts is under-

mined by administrative measures. The courts of law can no longer protect the individual; he is wholly at the mercy of the despotism of the administration. The press is suppressed. "Thus," says the zemstvo, "it is impossible for us to do anything." The emperor has lately recognised the necessity of granting free Bulgaria true self government, the inviolability of the rights of the individual and of justice, freedom of the press. The zemstvo of the Tver government hopes "that the Russian people may enjoy the same privileges. These alone can, at a sign from the emperor, make it possible for the people to enter upon the path of a development, gradual, peaceful, legal."

This again is the spirit of the 1879 report from the commission of the Tchernigov zemstvo. After running over the usual list of grievances, the report concludes thus. "The zemstvo of the Tchernigov government with unspeakable sorrow announces its utter inability to take any steps whatever against the evil, and considers it as its duty to inform the Government of this."¹ The Government, however, did not so much as condescend to pay any attention to these declarations. It merely gave orders to governors and the marshals of the nobility² to watch the zemstvos yet more strictly than before.

At the close of 1879, however, events occurred which produced on the emperor a deeper impression than that made by the voice of the people upon him.

¹ "Opinions of the Zemstvo Assemblies on the Actual Situation in Russia." 1883, Berlin.

² "The marshals of the nobility" is the legal name for the presidents of the zemstvo assemblies.

On November the 19th, 1879, under the very walls of Moscow, the imperial train was blown up; and on February the 5th, 1880, at the Winter Palace, there was the terrific explosion that destroyed the dining-hall. The emperor, by accident a little late for the dinner, actually witnessed the terrible catastrophe at the threshold, which luckily for him he had not crossed a moment earlier. Between the two explosions many arrests were made in Moscow. At the same time two secret printing-presses and certain dynamite bombs were seized. Other incidents of that time,—the murder of the spy Jarkov, the obstinate, desperate resistance to the seizure of the *Will of the People* printing-press, during which sixty revolver shots were fired on the two sides,—showed the emperor the strength of the revolutionary movement. At that time this strength was strangely exaggerated. At St. Petersburg there was hourly expectation of the outbreak of the revolution. The emperor thought he was on the brink of ruin, and on a sudden he made up his mind to grant certain concessions. He sent for a well-known Liberal, Count Loris Mélikov, and gave him unlimited power, with a view to the restoration of order.

Here a very interesting period of the contemporary history of Russia begins. It is one of which it is difficult to speak. As yet everything is shrouded in mystery, that the gossip of the town at once dispels and re-forms, and we find ourselves, strive as we may, in the realm of tales and rumours. I know that in what follows I shall blunder times and again. Any one would, and I am simply frank enough to

tell the reader beforehand. The worth of my story is only that I try to be strictly impartial, and so, I hope, am more near the truth than most of the narrators of the end of Alexander II.'s reign and the beginning of that of Alexander III.

The Liberal party never had a more favourable moment for action. The emperor had called to office a man whom the Russian Liberals were willing to recognise as their representative and leader. Count Loris Mélikov's popularity in Russia was immense. Why, it is difficult to say. Popularity, like Fortune, has favourites, and Count Loris Mélikov had a grand opportunity. Of great ability, far more intelligent and cultured than the ordinary Russian statesman, Count Mélikov gained his reputation when he was ataman of the Cossack army on the Terek. It is true that there were at that time those who saw in the Count more of the shabby trickster than of the really large-minded, capable man of affairs. Of Armenian origin, he has retained something of the Asiatic in his nature. Of great energy, but with a distaste for, and distrust of, straightforward dealing, he prefers all sorts of ruses, dodges, devious ways.

He has shown these qualities even in war, in the which he gained much glory by the taking of Kars. His abilities as a general are beyond question, and his personal bravery well known. Yet he took Kars by money and intrigue rather than force of arms. At all events, everybody declared that the storming of Kars was a "put-up job," and that the fortress fell rather in consequence of the Count's secret negotiations with the Turkish authorities and the

Armenian leaders of the town—negotiations watered by a rain of gold.

Again, the Count was for a while Governor-General of Kharkov, a post to which he was appointed to quell sedition there. In it he earned once again the gratitude of the people. At a time when the life of the inhabitants of St. Petersburg, Kiev, Odessa, was at the mercy of the police, Kharkov was, so to say, a quiet isle, wherein the dweller slept calmly, with the certainty that the gendarmes would not,—at all events without some special reason,—burst into his wife's bedroom.

In 1879 Loris Mélikov had again a chance of distinguishing himself. Towards the close of 1878, Russia was terror-stricken by the news that the plague had broken out in Vietlianka, at the mouth of the Volga. The emperor appointed Loris Mélikov director of the measures to be taken against the pestilence. It is said that the Count carried out with great energy the sanitary measures necessary; but it is difficult to say in this case where his virtues end and chance begins; for, as a matter of fact, at the time of his appointment the epidemic was already over.¹ Whatever was the actual state of affairs, there was not a single case of the plague in the Volga after he came, and his success seemed astounding. Again, when the Winter Palace catastrophe occurred, the Count was called to St. Petersburg.

The calling Loris Mélikov to the ministry, in preference to any one else, was in itself a concession. He had the reputation of being a liberal

¹ "Forensic Medicine Report, 1880."

man. Kochelev, in his "Memoirs," speaks more than once of conversations with Loris Mélikov, and of the friendly relations between him and the count, whom he regards as holding the same opinions as himself. Now the opinions of Kochelev, leader of the Liberal party in the zemstvo, are well known. He is a monarchist, but he is at the same time the sworn foe of bureaucracy, the friend of local self-government, of freedom of speech and of the press. Recognising in the Tzar an absolute monarch, he looks upon the presence of a national assembly near the Tzar, to be consulted by him, as essential. On the necessity of this zemsky-sobor (national assembly) Kochelev had presented a memoir to the terrible Nicolas himself.

Loris Mélikov was regarded as even more liberal. It is quite likely that had Loris Mélikov at once made the calling together of the representatives of the people by the emperor a condition *sine quâ non*, the emperor would have consented. But the count did nothing of the sort. Perhaps he did not himself understand all the importance of this step; perhaps courage failed him, and he did not care to put the question to the Tzar point-blank. Perhaps he did not care to run the risk of a rupture, and preferred to take a method less hasty. Whatever were the reasons, he pursued a course altogether different.

He put an end to the state of siege. He allowed the press to speak. He authorized the starting of certain new journals. Deportations and arrests became quite rarities; some repentant revolutionists were pardoned by the count. For some months Russia breathed freely. On his part, the count

seemed hesitating, feeling his way carefully. He was as if preparing for he knew not what. He tried to form a party in the Government; he surrounded the throne with new ministers. He induced Alexander II. to dismiss Count Dmitri Tolstoi. Every one applauded this step. The press followed with its maledictions the fallen minister, and when Tolstoi, after his retirement into private life, presented himself as candidate for the zemstvo in the province of his birth, he was not elected. Alas! press and zemstvo little thought that in two years he whom they were insulting would take a startling vengeance on them. They were in triumph, and the Liberal press cried aloud, "*Ex oriente lux!*"

Yet another surprise did Count Loris Mélikov give society; although this one was much after the habitual tricks of governments. He induced the Tzar to abolish the terrible Third Section.¹ This was a mere phrase. The political police was not got rid of by this decision; only its name was changed. This reform only served to show to any one of shrewdness that the count, instead of undertaking real reforms, was already embarked on the sea of mystifications. But society did not see this yet; it went on its way rejoicing.

When the count came into office, he found the personal surroundings of the emperor in a very mixed condition. For some time past Alexander II. had been carrying on a *liaison* with the Princess Catherine Dolgoroukova, scion of a noble but poor family.²

¹ That of the political police.

² *The Common Cause*, No. 48, article on "Princess Iourievskaïa, ex-empress."

The affair was not, however, as venal as are most of the same sort. The emperor really cared for the princess so much that the imperial family was uneasy and dissatisfied. The wife of the heir-apparent, they say, was especially offended.

In the middle of all this, just after the advent of Loris Mélikov to power, the empress died. A new complication. Up to that time, it is said, that Loris Mélikov had been able to keep on the best of terms with the Tzarevitch. According to the gossip of the town, they were working together with the object of making the Tzar favourable to certain necessary reforms. After the empress's death, the emperor resolved to marry Princess Dolgoroukova, who, if we may believe the statements made by Victor Laferte,¹ exercised a very great influence over him. Loris Mélikov at once began to join forces with the princess. He was to support the project of her marriage with the emperor, whilst she was to give him her help in respect to his plans for reform.

In any case, it is said that at the outset the Princess Iourievskaïa looked upon measures of reform as indispensable; and in this there is nothing impossible, for as she did not belong in reality to the world of courtesans, she had certainly the opportunity of observing the situation of affairs in Russia. The princess knew that in her wish to marry the emperor, she would be opposed by all the upper classes, and, as a consequence, she should try to

¹ "Unpublished Details of Alexander II.'s Life and Death." The writer, who signs himself Victor Laferte, is clearly an intimate friend of the Most Serene Princess Iourievskaïa, the title of the Princess Dolgoroukova.

make herself generally popular by supporting liberal proposals. Her projected marriage with the emperor was kept the closest secret, especially from the heir-apparent, so that when, one fine morning, the emperor presented her to the Tzarevitch and the Tzarevna as his wife and their mother, it was a thunder-clap to them. The Tzarevitch was very angry with Count Loris Mélikov's conduct, and in all probability this feeling had much to do with his fall. At least this is the common gossip.

Strange to say, as soon as Princess Iourievskaïa became almost an empress, for by law she could not be a full-blown one—as soon as the rumour got abroad that the Tzar intended to have her crowned (a false report probably)—as soon as Loris Mélikov was the close friend of the emperor, there was no more talk of reforms. For over a year Loris Mélikov was in power; for over a year no act of violence was committed by the revolutionists; for over a year Russian society waited, and no reforms came.

But this was not all. Mélikov urged the Liberals not to give way to illusory ideas. In a private talk with Kochelev, he declared that he had lost all hope of obtaining from the emperor his consent to a summoning of the national assembly.¹

Nor was even this the end. Gradually reprisals against the press, arrests began again. It is true Loris Mélikov worked out a plan of indispensable reforms for Russia, among which, it is said, were the extension of the self-government of the zemstvo, extension of the liberty of the press, certain

¹ "Kochelev's Memoirs."

measures for the bettering the peasants' condition. He even had an idea of convoking an assembly of governors, marshals of the nobility, representatives of high standing in the zemstvo and the towns, whose work would be to discuss these proposals. Victor Laferte, whose evidence is confirmed by certain statements in the public press, states even that the decree for the summoning this assembly was signed by the emperor almost on the eve of his death.

Of course all these plans were far other than those that Russia had hoped for. Those to be summoned were notables, not representatives. Only certain measures were to be submitted to them, and not the condition of the country as a whole. And the calling of these men together was kept a profound mystery, as if it was the personal affair of the emperor, and not any concern of the country that was waiting, full of anxiety, for some solution of the intolerable situation. Alexander II. was terrified; he hesitated. It is extremely probable that he would have withdrawn his decree that summoned together the notables.

In the midst of his hesitation came the explosion of the 1-13th of March, 1881. The emperor died almost on the spot. As suddenly, Alexander III. found himself master of Russia, at a time full of embarrassment.

The fatal element in all questions of political reforms in Russia is this: that when the country is silent, even from motives of policy, the emperors draw thence the conclusion that it is content, and that concessions are therefore useless. When the

country begins to rebel, or even merely to formulate its demands, the autocrats discover that it is not consistent with their honour to grant concessions under pressure.

On the coming to the throne of Alexander III., the voice of the people spoke out with no uncertain sound. Here it is enough to call to mind the opinions of the press during the days immediately after the 1-13th of March, even whilst the emperor's corpse was still lying in the Winter Palace. "The will of the Most High is accomplished," wrote *Order*. "Now nothing remains but to bow before the immutable will of Providence, and, without entering upon a useless struggle with that will, to consecrate all efforts to the laying of a lasting foundation for the future. It is not of a pernicious reaction . . . that we now must speak. . . . Sire! severe restrictive measures have proved their own insufficiency. Ask your own people in the person of their chosen representatives."

"Why," cried *The Country*, "why should the responsibility of everything that is done in Russia, of economic blunders, of reactionary measures, of deportations into eastern Siberia, rest upon the head of the Russian nation alone? The incapable counsellors, the leaders of reaction, are to-day safe and sound,—and our Tzar, the emancipator, has perished." And the same journal ends thus: "Fundamental measures of internal policy ought to be inspired by the nation's representatives, and upon them should rest all responsibility. The person of the Tzar must be in the future no more than a symbol—of equal significance to all men—of our national unity,

of our strength, and of the growing prosperity of Russia."

The Voice said: "From all the foregoing facts stands out clearly the necessity of founding a national organization that will be able, in concert with the Government, to contribute to the prosperity of the country dear to us all. It is absolutely necessary to resume those reforms interrupted by sedition, and to do this by an appeal for help to all the forces of the nation." Utterances of this kind were rife in most of the journals. Kindred ones came from the zemstvos. In the addresses of condolence to the emperor on the death of his father, more or less direct allusions were made to a constitution by the governmental assemblies of Samara, Novgorod, Kazan, Tver, Riazan, by the assembly of the zemstvo of the provinces of Soligalitch, by those of the nobles of Samara and of Tchernigov, and by the municipal council of Kazan. In many places this was not done, from a sentiment of delicacy. This was the case *e.g.* in the zemstvo of the Tauride, which was of opinion that "it would be wanting in tact to speak of the Constitution to the Tzar just at the time when his heart was torn with filial anguish."

This sentiment of delicacy was not unnatural, and was shared by the revolutionists themselves. In point of fact, when the executive committee sent to Alexander III. its declaration as to the necessity of convoking a constituent assembly, it made excuses for speaking at such a time, and said that nothing but the impossibility of losing time when Russia was in a position so intolerable forced the com-

mittee to ignore "that natural sentiment of delicacy which asked that a more favourable moment should be waited for."

Even without these utterances from the country generally, the emperor had still in his hands his father's decree—probably bearing his father's signature—convoking the notables.

It is true that the Government's attention was absorbed by something else—the securing the emperor's personal safety. All through the city numberless domiciliary visits, and arrests not less numerous, took place. At the same time an asylum of safety was sought for the emperor, and the palaces were searched from roof to basement. All round the Annitchkov Palace a deep ditch was dug, if haply there might be a mine somewhere or other.

Despite all these varied occupations, the fate of the decree had to be settled. Whether to issue it or not? If the decree was a kind of last will and testament of Alexander II.—the expression in some measure of his last wishes,—it was unbecoming that it should not be carried out by his son. But to summon the notables was to pledge himself at a stroke to liberal views. The reactionary party began to bestir itself. The Grand Duke Vladimir, the Tzar's brother, and once, they say, pretender to the throne, was especially noisy. It is said that the late empress for a time hoped she might be able to induce Alexander to abdicate in favour of Vladimir, who is looked upon as the ablest of the imperial family. He is, in fact, a man of great energy, although a terrible despot and reactionary.

He protested loudly against any idea of concession, and was the very fulcrum of the reactionary party.

The Tzar was in doubt what to do. A week after his father's death he summoned an extraordinary sitting of the ministerial council. At this the storm broke out. Loris Mélikov was accused of desiring to overthrow the autocracy. He grew angry, and showed with much warmth that reforms were necessary to the consolidation of the monarchy itself. When the question was put to the vote, by a majority of 9 to 5 the council declared for the issuing the decree. The emperor thanked the majority for their plain speaking,—and did nothing.

All this time the reactionary party was not idle. From every side it brought influence to bear on the Tzar. Devotion without limit, full of self-abnegation, was shown him. Seeing that the question of the Tzar's personal safety dominated the politics of the moment, the faithful conceived the idea of founding a secret society, with as aims the protection of the Tzar and the putting down of sedition. Thus ere long the Holy League came into existence.

At the same time, with the help of the reactionary press, an active agitation was got up that was quoted as evidence of the monarchical tendency of public opinion. *The Moscow Gazette, Contemporary News, Aksakov's Russia*, uttered loud outcries against sedition and the Liberals, supported mutual espionage among inmates of the same house, and so forth. *Russia* essayed to prove to the emperor that the real cause of all the trouble was the dread that the Tzar would make concessions, and that

everything would settle down as soon as the emperor declared solemnly to his people his immutable decision to maintain intact the autocratic power.

The like pressure was brought to bear on the Tzar by personal influence. To this end, Pobiedonostsev managed to bring together the Tzar and Katkov. But the most useful man to the reactionaries was Aksakov. This Slavophile, well known for his opposition to bureaucracy, had the reputation of a perfectly honest man, in favour of liberty of speech, of local self-government, of the national assembly. Unfortunately, with a Slavophile all this is perfectly consistent with autocracy and with absolute antagonism to any constitutional government.

Russia is a country with a civilization of its own. It must have a special arrangement, by virtue of which an absolute autocracy should agree to grant its subjects the privilege of being free. This theory, the absurdity of which is perfectly understood by Pobiedonostsev and Katkov now, was none the less very useful to them. Aksakov, with much eloquence, proved to the Tzar that his first duty was the guarding of absolute power, and after that "to act according to his own inspirations." No one understood the meaning of the second part of this programme; but the first part pleased the Tzar all the more as it was laid down by a man whom every one respected.

Thus the Reactionaries were a compact party, acting in unison and with skill. Its leaders, personally and without intermediaries, directed the great body of their followers, organizing them and

attaching them to the party by their individual interests. The Liberals, on the other hand, acted without any common agreement, each as seemed good to him. Men of liberal opinions were still in power, but there was no bond between them and their own party. Whilst the Reactionaries in their journals used every effort to accentuate the protests against a Constitution, the Liberal ministers closed the mouths of their party organs at the least allusion to the subject. In March and April the Liberal ministry issued against newspapers twelve warnings, three suspensions, two forbiddings of sale, without reckoning a large number of prohibitions from speaking on particular questions, of which the Constitution was one.

It is no use to say that the Liberal ministers were afraid of the mere idea of taking part in the organization of the Liberal party with as an end the exertion of systematic pressure on the Government. It is true that the timid attempts at union noted above still went on in the zemstvo. But they were insignificant and abortive. The police reports mentioned already declare that the Liberal League did not refuse a certain support to the revolutionists. As soon as they knew this fact, the members of the zemstvo decided to cut themselves off from all connection with the league. Their Kharkov congress, of thirty members, passed a resolution that they should pursue single-handed the realization of their programme. This included centralized popular representation and the decentralization of the administration. This group, taking as name "the Alliance of the Zemstvos," admitted as means to these ends—

- (1) Influence on the *personnel* of the Government;
- (2) Propaganda in society;
- (3) Action on society through the press.

In all these there is no trace of a decision to act in any case by force. Moreover, this group worked in complete isolation, and quarrelled even with the Liberal League, which had also ceased to take part in any active measures.

In fine, from end to end, the Liberals showed that they were worthy one of another. Whilst they kept reasoning and procrastinating, the Reactionaries were acting.

When the postponement of the decree was obtained on March the 8th, the Reactionaries thought of a very smart device. This was to induce the emperor to take some step or other that would once for all separate him from the constitutional party. To bring this about they wrote secretly a manifesto, in which the Tzar was made to say plainly, "The voice of God ordains that we place ourselves firmly at the head of the Government, trusting in Divine Providence, and full of hope in the strength and the justice of those absolute powers which we are called upon to consolidate and to protect from all assault."¹

This manifesto, copied almost word for word in Aksakov's articles, was, it is said, not only written, but printed without the knowledge of the Liberal ministers, on whose heads it fell like a thunderbolt. "It is treason!" cried Loris Mélikov, when he knew of it. It was a clever stroke. Loris Mélikov considered it his duty to hand in his resignation. As

¹ Manifesto of April 29.

for the emperor, apparently he did not very clearly understand the gravity of the step he had taken. At all events he was greatly astonished that the Liberal ministers handed in their resignations after the issuing of the manifesto.¹

Thus, within scarce a month of the accession of Alexander III., the Reactionaries had gained a whole series of marked successes, without reckoning the fact that by degrees all the Liberal ministers were got rid of—Gortchakov, Sabourov, Loris Mélikov, Milioutine, Abaza. The edifice on the building of which Loris Mélikov had been at work a whole year was broken up in four weeks.

The Government was in the hands of the Reactionaries ; yet the Liberals, as a body, were not yet defeated. Their foes were still afraid of them. It was still looked upon as necessary to make certain concessions to them, or at least to effect certain changes. The Government felt that it was weak, and was, in reality, in a very precarious condition. The question might indeed be asked, whether at that time Russia even had any Government.

The emperor withdrew to Gatchina. This silent palace of Paul I., already more like a fortress than a palace, was fortified yet more strongly, was isolated yet more completely from the rest of the world. A great army surrounded the Tzar on all sides, guarded all avenues of approach to him. The position of Gatchina was exceptional. It was a junction for four railroads, by which one could travel any whither—to Moscow, Warsaw, St. Petersburg,

¹ "The Fiasco of Alexander II.'s Reforms." Also the *General Cause*, No. 41.

Kronstadt, abroad. And this could be done in perfect secrecy. There the emperor passed his time in perfect solitude. Access to him was exceedingly difficult; every one that came to see him was searched. With so much mystery did the Tzar invest his rare departures from Gatchina, that when he went to see the Emperor William, his own ministers did not know he was gone, and came with their usual reports to the palace.

Under such circumstances, to bring the personal influence of the Tzar to bear on the conduct of affairs became a matter of great difficulty. This would not have mattered much under ordinary circumstances, where affairs are directed by statesmen. But Alexander III.'s most intimate councillors had not any official character. Pobiedonostsev, as procureur-general of the synod, could of course only influence other departments indirectly. Katkov, the journalist, held no official place. The other favourites, in whom the emperor had special confidence, were complete nonentities. It was as if the Reactionaries deliberately left the government of the country in anybody's hands, in order to concentrate all their attention on one point alone—the getting hold, once for all, of the emperor. In fact, instead of making ministries, they hid themselves away in quite secondary positions, but worked hard at organizing the Holy League, at whose head were, it is reported, the Grand Duke Vladimir and Pobiedonostsev.

This society had for aim, as I have said, the protection of the emperor and antagonism to the revolutionists. It was organized, according to its own

admission, upon the plan of the "Executive Committee," *i.e.*, as a secret society thoroughly centralized and militant. The State police had no control over the Holy League; in point of fact they were under the surveillance of the League. The leaders of this body were very wealthy. One source of their wealth, in addition to many others, was the enormous fortune of Prince Démidov San Donato. This odd person is of European notoriety on account of his many eccentricities. With a fortune whose extent he does not himself know, he was long ago weary of all the pleasures of life, and, it would seem, only went in for politics to get rid of his *ennui* and to give some occupation to his worn-out imagination. He was attracted by the mystery of a secret society, by its pass-words, ciphers, mystic signs, its death-sentences issuing from an unseen authority and striking the condemned man with an invisible hand.

In point of fact the Holy League did try to find employment for its members in work of this kind. It is said to have pronounced sentence of death on Hartmann, Krapotkine, Lavrov. In Switzerland this gave rise to a strange event. A Russian woman made an attempt on the life of a peaceable citizen, whom, according to her account, she took for Lavrov. The woman was found to be insane, but rumour gave the Holy League the credit of the affair.

The League organized a secret police, whose members kept the revolutionists under surveillance, and possibly were themselves enrolled in the ranks of the revolutionists. All this, probably, did not escape the notice of the emperor himself. A secret society, wealthy, militant, with its own police, per-

haps its own army, might one fine morning turn all these against the emperor himself, if he was not amenable to the ideas of these fanatics of reaction.

This uneasiness has, possibly, led to the formation of another secret society, the Voluntary Defence. The police reports state that this society enjoys the particular and special confidence of the monarch. In this fact there would be nothing remarkable, if it is true that the head of this league is Count Vorontsov Dachkov. It is a strange coincidence that in the life of Alexander III. one comes constantly upon mysterious points of resemblance to the lives of the most ill-starred of the Tzars. He was born, like Paul I., of a father killed by conspirators ; like Paul I. he has taken refuge at Gatchina ; like Peter III. he is intimately connected with the family of Vorontsov Dachkov, a fatal house to Peter III. One of the Vorontsovs was his most devoted lover, and the mother of this Mademoiselle Dachkov led, with an energy more virile than feminine, a plot against Peter III. The present Count Vorontsov Dachkov is, for the rest, looked upon as a man lacking in political strength and keenness, but an honest follower of Alexander III., to whom he is devoted heart and soul.

That this devoted ally is at the head of the Voluntary Defence should be a guarantee to the emperor against any kind of uneasiness. The Defence worked on a much larger scale and with much more prudence than the League. It had for aim the watching over the emperor's safety and the bringing about of his coronation ; but it rejected all idea of political murders. Enjoying as it does the protection of

the Tzar, the society recruits its members almost, as it were, by official invitations. As far as the army is concerned, this method of recruiting is actually used.

Connected as it is with the police, the society yet includes a considerable number of liberal members, who thought that in this way they may be able to influence the Tzar in the direction of liberal reforms. The most embittered reactionaries did not like this society. Count Tolstoi hated it. But it grew, and, it would seem, became for a time the centre of other societies. Thus it entered into alliance with the Holy League, on condition that the latter gave up its plan of political murder, and at the same time it came into relation with the Alliance of the Zemstvos. For a time the latter, nevertheless, developed rapidly, and even came to the determination to publish a political journal for the benefit of the world without, *Free Speech*.

The result of all these societies is a general state of confusion. Liberals, radicals, spies, honest reactionaries, all are jumbled up together in a troubled sea, wherein all men that are adroit enough can fish. It is needless to say that in the ultimate issue the Liberals were not the fishermen. Mixed up with spies, the men who might best have served them as guides compromised, all their plans and all their members known to the police, and yet no step of importance having been resolved upon, the Liberals were fore-ordained to defeat on the day that the Government felt itself strong enough to overwhelm them.

In the bye-ways of politics, parties were forming

secret societies, trying to get hold of the Tzar, playing upon his fears and on his anxiety to be crowned as soon as possible. At the same time, in the official home policy of Russia there was a dead lock, such as the country had never seen the like of before. The Reactionaries of intelligence and energy either could not or would not take the reins of government. They confined themselves to urging upon the Government the rooting out of the revolutionary spirit and the organization of the police. The majority of the Liberals helped rather than opposed them. Thus came to pass the terrible "regulation as to measures to insure the safety of the State," to which is appended, along with the names of red-hot Reactionaries like Strielnikov, the name of the well-known Liberal, Kokhanov. At the same time the party of Reaction prevented any Liberal of intelligence from reaching any of the posts of importance in the State. Power fell inevitably into the hands of people who, as nonentities, excited no fear among either Liberals or Reactionaries. Among these nonentities, Count Ighnatiev stands out notably.

It is not my wish to enter into a discussion as to the count's capacities ; but for a whole year the part he played was of the saddest. He knew how to prepare for the final triumph of reaction by means from which Katkov and Pobiedonostsev had recoiled. Nor do I know whether the count worked by design or by accident. But on the assumption that he knew what he was doing, and that he wanted to do what he did, the principles of his system may be analysed as follows : to remain passive, whilst at

the same time taking care that the most incoherent, meaningless rumours were spread everywhere throughout the country, wearied out with a very madness of disorder. It was necessary, to avoid any concession to absolutism, to play off the demands of the cultured class against those of the so-called people, and at the same time to grant nothing whatever to the latter.

In the solution of this problem—called the “popular policy,”—he made use of the reforms that Loris Mélikov had reckoned upon effecting. It would have been awkward to leave untouched the projects of Loris Mélikov, seeing that they had already been in part given to the public; notably the question of reform of the peasants’ self-government, which, in the time of Alexander II., had been submitted to the zemstvos for consideration. These reforms were the instrument upon which Count Ighnatiev played.

Before all things, he tried to secure himself against the press. Terrible persecution of journals set in. In the two years between the accession and coronation of Alexander III., twenty-eight journals suffered penalties of one kind or another. In all they had forty-four warnings, and the same number of penalties of other kinds—such as suspension, interdiction of sale, and so forth. Certain journals of liberal tone did not bring out one-half their numbers in the year. Thirteen journals were killed by various means. At the same time Count Ighnatiev created a Government press, entered into negotiations with certain venal editors, started a journal for the people, *The Village Messenger*, and created a

special telegraphic agency, subsidizing it to the extent of millions of roubles, for the promulgation of "safe news."

Thus Count Ighnatiev raised throughout Russia a vast amount of discussion upon questions carefully prepared by him. These were the reduction of the sums to be paid as ransom for the land, the hurrying on of that ransom, the facilities granted the peasants by the renting of the Crown lands, the direction and systematizing of peasant migration, the suppression of drunkenness. The more insignificant the question raised, the greater fuss and stir did Count Ighnatiev make about it. When drunkenness was to be put down, masses were chanted everywhere, appeals to the people made, the walls placarded with proclamations against brandy.

To make yet more noise, Count Ighnatiev called together to deliberate upon these questions pretended representative people, in reality different officials and others whom he thought fit to invite, for they were not elected. The suborned press went into ecstasies over this liberal institution. Criticism by independent organs was stifled by warnings and suppressions, and the reactionary press, pointing to the ridiculous meetings (and they were ridiculous) of these "able men," showed with much raillery the uselessness of "liberal measures."

With the inauguration, however, of the popular policy, the Government could, without any difficulty, declare in its newspapers that the cultured class ought not to be impatient for political liberty. As for the Constitution, that was quite useless, as the emperor was now once again a Muscovite Tzar and

a popular Tzar. This playing at nationalism after the old fashion gave quite a special flavour to the "popular policy." For months together nothing was spoken of in Russia but the necessity of restoring the ancient *régime* in the court, the restoration of squires and chamberlains, alteration of uniforms (even at times of great danger the emperor busied himself with this) after the Russian fashion, in accordance with the Russian taste. At court and fashionable balls the grand folk appeared rigged out in the dress of boyards, knights, diaks (secretaries) with ink-horn at girdle.

All this was hailed with deep emotion and ecstatic enthusiasm by Aksakov and Souvorine. Clearly Russia was at last upon the highway to national development. The newspapers pictured to the nation a fantastic vision of a peasant Tzar, benevolent, single-souled, the father of his people.

What was society generally doing? What were the Liberals? Assuredly they were standing to their guns. A liberal organ was proclaimed. They straightway rallied round another. The members of the zemstvo besieged the Government with demands and suggestions on every possible opportunity, *e.g.*, the zemstvos of Novgorod, Kirilov, Tver, again and again represented the absolute necessity of a representation of the people. But their voices were timid, and very soon, after one or two attempts, fell silent. Moreover, the ministry had taken steps to prevent any utterances of this kind. The governors had orders not to permit for the future any discussion in the zemstvos of questions of this nature. The President of the

Kirilov zemstvo was unseated, and the statement of his zemstvo was, by order of the governor, not printed.

In the government of Vladimir, the governor, opening the session of the zemstvo, begged it "not to go beyond the limits" of its programme. The petition of the Samara zemstvo in respect to the "eligibility of the able men" was never put to the vote. At Kherson the governor refused to allow a petition of the same kind to be discussed. In view of these steps, the desire of the zemstvo to ask for an assembly of representatives took a form constantly more timid. Thus the assemblies of Kharkov and Tchernigov asked that questions relating to the peasant administration which the Government had submitted to them for discussion, should be investigated by a "congress of representatives of all the zemstvos," and twelve governmental assemblies of zemstvos expressed a hope that the "able men" should be elected, and not merely nominated by the Government.

Some of the assemblies, *e.g.*, that of Novgorod, had the audacity to support their petitions by quoting the fact that their members were forbidden to take any part in the congress of "able men." unless at the direction of their zemstvo.

All these abortive attempts are of interest in one sense. They show the inclinations of the Russian people. Upon the Government they had no effect seeing that the Government failed to see in them any determination to support by force that which was asked for. Such a determination was seen neither in the alliance of the zemstvos, which, more-

over, was always very few in number, nor in the small Liberal groups that had held on to the "Defence."

All these men, all these innumerable but disjointed groups, trembling before the Government, trembling before the *plebs*, antagonistic to any act of violence, making proof for a whole year of their utter ineptitude for plans and plots—no longer moved the Government to fear. They themselves, to tell the truth, were anxious that this should come about, as they thought that the moment fear was at an end, a new era of political liberty inaugurated by the Tzar would begin. The very opposite of this happened.

The revolutionists alone continued to trouble the Government. But the police at this time unearthed many men of remarkable ability: Soudiéikine especially, a man almost of geniality in his particular way, although inwardly pondering ambitious plans that would have made the Government's hair stand on end had it known of them. Soudiéikine organized the police remarkably well, and on more than one occasion completely spoilt the plans of the revolutionists. As far as these were concerned, Pobiedonostsev and Katkov, if not the emperor, could be much more at ease.

Further, Ighnatiev's policy, certainly unworthy of a real statesman like Tolstoi or Katkov, was already played out. It had taken the heart out of all Russian society, begotten a general chaos, jumbled up all men's ideas in an indistinguishable heap, without form and void, so that even socialists and democrats could group them around the "peasant

Tzar," and at the same time, under *ægis* of that Tzar, Jews and landlords could be massacred.

It was time to make an end of profiting by disorder, and to inaugurate order. The emperor dismissed Ighnatiev, and summoned Count Tolstoï. "Count," he may have said, "you are the only man in Russia I can nominate Minister of the Interior." Tolstoï made answer that he was at the Tzar's service, but was not aware if his views had the honour of meeting with his majesty's approval. "I do not," he explained, "understand the peasantry of Russia at all. To me the strength of Russia, as of all countries, lies in the cultured classes and the growth of civilization. I am quite conscious of the fact that I was persistently the antagonist of the reforms of the preceding reign." By the cultured classes, Count Tolstoï understood the nobles; by the growth of civilization, increase in the police. Although the emporer had for a year played the part of the peasant Tzar, he, in his blindness, endorsed the ideas of the count, who did not understand the peasantry of Russia at all. The popular policy dies out, and we enter upon the present condition of affairs.

The party of reaction had once for all resolved to take an open part in the Government. For a time it still was almost wholly inactive, and spent all its energies in bringing to a happy end the emperor's coronation, which, as all the world knows, took place in the most satisfactory way, in the midst of several thousand members of the Defence, countless police, and a fictitious populace hired at an exceedingly moderate fee.

Thus the struggle between the two parties ended in the complete victory of that of reaction. At the present time all their energy is devoted to the consolidation of their power, and to the establishing in Russia of a condition of affairs in harmony with their ideas. Secret societies are suppressed by the Tzar. The police enter once again upon that arena of activity allowed them by the law, and the limits of which are infinitely wider than they have ever been. Legislation is beginning to destroy, one by one, the meagre reforms of Alexander II. The press is subject to the censorship.¹ The autonomy of the universities is suppressed. Trial by jury with difficulty is maintained, after undergoing infringement upon infringement. All the dreams of the days of Mélikov and Ighnatiev are vanished.

But to this triumphal march of reaction, one thing alone is wanting—the support of the people. This it tries to gain by an endeavour to make a resurrection of the nobility and the clergy. The public treasure is squandered by the thousand, to resuscitate these moribund ones. The Reactionaries are scheming to give over the zemstvo into the hands of the nobility, the schools into those of the clergy. With a view to raising the caste feeling of the nobles, it is said that the Tzar will, from this time forth, be the sole source of this high dignity. A bank has been started in aid of the extension of the landed property of the nobles.

The work of the party of reaction is in full swing. What is to be the issue? Will the will of Katkov

¹ By the new law, each journal or review is under the censorship after one warning.

make of Russia a country of gentlefolk, peacefully taking their ease in the shadow of a policeman's baton.' Or will this attempt to "turn currents aside" end in a terrific explosion, like that of a volume of steam hermetically sealed in a caldron heated white-hot?

APPENDIXES.

- A.* STATISTICS OF THE NATIONAL REVENUE.
- B.* THE TERM NIHILISTS.
- C.* SUBJECTS INTERDICTED BY THE CENSORSHIP.
- D.* PARTITION OF LANDS.
- E.* WORKS QUOTED.

APPENDIX A.

STATISTICS OF THE NATIONAL REVENUE.

In spite of my wish to do so, in estimating the Russian national revenue, I have not been able to make use of the estimates to be found in the literature on this subject.

In most cases the figures are too much out of date, and frequently I do not agree with the authors,—not even with their system of reckoning; above all, I cannot endorse evident errors, such, for example, as those into which Schnitzler has fallen.¹ He estimates the national revenue at 16 milliards, but he only arrives at this figure by rating the silver rouble at 4 francs. This author, whose erudition is beyond question, apparently confounds the silver rouble,—which is simply the name of the *paper rouble*,—with the *metal rouble*. Russia is thus made at least 20 to 30 per cent. richer than she really is. Next, we frequently find in Schnitzler, as in the other statisticians, a two-fold enumeration of products; thus they reckon the *labour* of horses and cattle, forgetting that this

¹ J. H. Schnitzler: "L'Empire des Tzars au point de vue actuel de la Science." Paris, 1869.

labour is already estimated under the agricultural products, forests, and so forth.

Again, the statisticians try to reckon and include in the general sum of the national revenue the value given to products by commerce. Without denying the scientific interest of this question, I believe that in practice this method of calculation leads to confusion, and to a double estimate of the same product. In fact, if we estimate the product by its average price in the market, the value of the merchant's labour is already included. And if we estimate the product otherwise than by its price in the market, we must infallibly end in arbitrary hypotheses. The wish to avoid errors, of which I have here indicated only a small portion, and the necessity of conforming to the latest statistical reports, have induced me to make a calculation myself of the national revenue. Still I retain the older figures of the economists wherever the figures are in agreement with contemporary facts.

The greatest part of values in Russia is produced by rural economy. The following is the quantity of corn of the 1883 harvest, which I reckon according to the average market-price during the last few years (the cost of seed deducted) :—

1. *Wheat.*

28,602,000 tchettv., at 9 roubles	
each	= 257 million roubles.

2. *Rye.*

66,059,000 tchettv., at 7 roubles	
each	= 492 million , ,

3. *Oats.*

67,671,000 tchettv., at 4 roubles	
each	= 270 million , ,

4. *Barley.*

16,792,000 tchetv., at 5 roubles
 each = 83 million roubles.

5. *Buck-wheat.*

9,442,000 tchetv., at 7 roubles
 each = 66 million ,,

6. *Other grains* (millet, peas, beans, maize, etc.).

15,765,000 tchetv., at 6 roubles
 each = 95 million roubles.

The official returns of the harvest of 1883 do not include the Northern Caucasus and Siberia. Yet we must estimate the crop there as at least 20 millions (these figures probably are below the actual ones), worth 120 million roubles. Thus the total amount of the grain harvest is 224 million of tchetv., worth 1,383 million roubles.

The potato crop, according to the same returns, was in European Russia, 32,351,000 tchetv. Estimating the Caucasian and Siberian crops at 1½ million tchetv., we have a total of 33,851,000 tchetv., yielding, at 1 rouble 50, a sum of 48 million roubles.

The quantity of *hay* and *straw*, according to the latest returns, is as follows :—

Hay.

4,000,000,000 pouds at 10 kop.
 each = 400 million roubles.

Straw.

2,000,000,000 pouds at 5 kop.
 each = 100 million ,,

Plants for spinning. ("Military Statistics Report," vol. iv.)

(a) Flax in yarn, 12,000,000 pouds at 4 roubles each . . = 48 million roubles.

- (b) Flax in seed, 25,000,000
pounds at 1 rouble each . = 25 million roubles.
- (c) Hemp in tow, 6,000,000
pounds at 2 roubles each . = 12 million ,,
- (d) Hemp in seed, 25,000,000
pounds at 1 rouble each . = 25 million ,,

The returns for orchards and kitchen-gardens are so difficult to estimate, that I accept the old figures of Tengoborsky ("Studies of the Productive Forces of Russia"), 60,000,000 roubles.

Beetroot.—The sugar refineries alone absorbed (in 1883) 20,000,000 berkovets. This gives, reckoning the berkovet at 1 rouble, 20,000,000 roubles.

Tobacco.—According to the returns of 1878, 3,500,000 pounds were gathered in. This, at 2 roubles the poud, gives 7,000,000 roubles.

Grapes.—The quantity of wine in Russia is estimated at about 5,000,000 vedros, at 80 kop. the vedro, yielding 4,000,000 roubles.

Dyeing plants yield about 2,000,000 roubles.

The total products of agriculture may thus be reckoned at 2,130 million roubles.

In spite of the absence of any regular forest cultivation, the vast forests of Russia yield much produce to the population. In many places wood-rafting and the distilling of tar and resin are the principal occupations of the people. Moreover, the consumption of wood in Russia is very great. The majority of the population live in wooden houses, use wooden plates, dishes, and utensils; wood is used for firing, even in the factories, on railways, etc. The sum total of products derived by the Russians from their wood is, according to Bouchene, 750 million roubles. These figures are understated rather than exaggerated. But it should be re-

marked that in Russia the income from the woods is not a revenue of capital, but a consumption of capital. The destruction of the forests is making rapid strides, and gives rise to complaints all over Russia.

The other branch of rural economy, the breeding of cattle, is also of the utmost importance to Russia. According to the census of horses in 1882, their number in European Russia alone was estimated at twenty millions. There are not less than twenty-four million head of cattle in Russia, fifty million sheep, about 1,500,000 goats, over ten million pigs, and, in smaller numbers, camels, reindeer, buffaloes, etc. As to domesticated birds, their generally enormous number can only be guessed at. The products due to this immense number of animals are varied and abundant. Only, the value of the greater part of the products due to the breeding of cattle has already entered into the value of the agricultural produce; for example, everything created by the labour of horses and cattle. In the same way the value of manure, which brings in more to Russia than her gold mines, has been reckoned in that of the agricultural produce. We have at present, then, only to take into consideration that part of the produce of cattle-breeding whose value we have not yet estimated. Thus, of the general value of horses, we can set down only three million roubles for hides, meat, and milk.

Cattle produce a mass of value beyond their worth. Statistics give :

(a) Five million of hides, at five
roubles each = 25,000,000 roubles.

(b) Meat(according to Bouchene)	=	83,000,000 roubles.
(c) Fat	=	17,500,000 ,,
(d) Milk (according to Ianson)		
336 million vedros, at 30		
kop. the vedro =	100,000,000	,,
(e) Butter, over three million		
pounds, at eight roubles		
the poud =	24,000,000	,,
Total (cheese not included) .	250,000,000	roubles.

We cannot, however, include the whole of this sum in the national revenue, since the value of the fodder consumed by the animals evidently enters into it, and has already been considered in our calculation. What sum must we deduct from 250 million roubles for the sum that expresses the increase of value which the animals add to the fodder consumed? Under the conditions of Russian rural economy, the value of the fodder may be set down at 60 per cent. upon the general value of the products of breeding. I arrive at this sum by the study of many tables. Consequently the actual increase in the national revenue created by the animals must reach about 100 million roubles. The value of the products from the breeding of wool-bearing animals is as follows:—

(a) Sheep-skins, two millions, at		
one rouble apiece =	2,000,000	roubles.
(b) Mutton, ten million pounds .	=	30,000,000 ,,
(c) Fat, three million pounds .	=	6,000,000 ,,
(d) Wool =	42,000,000	,,
Total	80,000,000	roubles.

Deducting the value of the fodder (about 50 per cent.), we have 40 million roubles.

I believe about five million pigs are consumed in Russia; reckoning the average price per head at about five roubles, and the value of the fodder at about 30 per cent., we have a revenue of some 17,500,000 roubles.

The produce of bird-breeding is rated—quite arbitrarily—by Tengoborsky, at ten million roubles. I have no data by which to correct these figures, except that, taking into account the value of the grain, they must be diminished by 20 per cent., that is to say, they must be reduced to eight million roubles. The actual yield of bird-breeding is probably much greater.

Finally, Russia exports abroad nineteen million roubles' worth of cattle. Supposing that the value of the forage is 50 per cent. of this sum, we may add 9,500,000 roubles to the national revenue.

Altogether, the general sum of values added to the national revenue by the breeding of animals may perhaps be estimated at 176 million of roubles.

Bee culture and silk culture are not very important branches of rural economy in Russia.

In Russia, properly so-called, silk culture is little practised beyond the Caucasus, and does not enter into my calculations. Thus Russian silk culture cannot produce more than Tengoborsky supposes, —that is to say, about 1,200,000 roubles.

Bee culture, on the contrary, is a purely national branch of industry. At present in Russia nearly 700,000 pouds of honey are gathered, which, at five roubles the poud, give 3,500,000 roubles; and 200,000 pouds of wax, at ten roubles the poud, *i.e.* 2,000,000 roubles. As a whole, the yield of bee

and of silk culture cannot be less than 7,000,000 roubles.

The revenue from hunting is estimated at about four million roubles, that from the fisheries at twenty-four million roubles. These figures are both, especially the latter, much understated. Nevertheless, in the absence of data by which to correct them, they must be taken. It is, however, to be noted that Russian fisheries, which might in such well-stocked waters as the Sea of Azov and the Caspian become a very lucrative branch of commerce, have been for centuries carried on with a waste that is exhausting the supply with extraordinary rapidity.

Let us now pass to the working of the mines. Here again the natural riches are very badly turned to account.

	Pounds.		
(a) Gold	2,641	40	million roubles.
(b) Silver	616 . more than	$\frac{1}{2}$	million ,,
(c) Platinum	179 . less than	$\frac{1}{3}$	million ,,
(d) Lead	74,000	$2\frac{1}{3}$	million ,,
(e) Copper	190,000	2	million ,,
(f) Cast Iron	22,000,000 }	78	million ,,
(g) Iron & steel	30,000,000 }		
(h) Coal	120,000,000	8	million ,,
(i) Salt	47,000,000	24	million ,,
Total		$155\frac{1}{3}$	million roubles.

As to naphtha, it is but little worked in Russia proper (Northern Caucasus). There are also large naphtha springs in the land beyond the Caucasus, but I do not include these in the Russian national revenue.

Let us pass on to *industry* proper.

According to recent official returns (1882), in European Russia (exclusive of Poland and Finland) there are 57,000 workshops and factories, producing a total of 1,126 million roubles. From these figures however, 78 million roubles, already considered by us under the preceding category, must be deducted. The value of the raw material is, according to Schnitzler, 23 per cent. of the value of the product. This figure differs absolutely from the returns of Russian statistics. To judge from the factories of Moscow, where the value of the raw material varies from 10 per cent. to 85 per cent. upon the value of the product, we may assume an average value for raw material of 60 per cent. Thus the industry of factories and workshops in European Russia adds about 420 million roubles to the national revenue of Russia. We must further add to this sum nearly three million roubles created by the Russian industries of the Caucasus and Siberia. Finally, a very considerable amount of value is produced by small industries, that of the koustars and artisans. Here the data of official statistics are even less reliable than for the great industry. If we took the figures put together in the "Summary of Military Statistics," and if we rated the value of raw material at sixty per cent. (although it must be less), the general increase of national revenue for this kind of industry would be about 80 million roubles.¹ Altogether, industry gives the national revenue 503 million roubles.

¹ I select this figure as the least disputed one; but occasionally the production of the koustars is valued at three times this amount.

As a general total, we get for the national Russian revenue the sum of 3,740 million roubles, which is equal to about 11 milliard francs, if we reckon the rouble at three francs.

I regret, however, that these figures can only be considered as approximately accurate.

APPENDIX B.

THE TERM NIHILISTS.

THE militant section of the *intelliguentia*, that which I call the revolutionary, has in Europe received the strange name of *Nihilist*.

This title proves that the most erroneous notions on the subject of Russian revolutionists are current outside Russia. If, in fact, Europe understood the Russian revolutionary movement, and that which is going on among the *intelliguentia*, this word would certainly not have been used, any more than it is in Russia. The name, indeed, is only used among us in a bad sense, and only by persons capable of saying, "The anarchist party has at last attained to power in England; Mr. Labouchere is Prime Minister." In Russia there are journals capable of writing such a phrase; but if, relying on a telegram of this description, I were to call Mr. Labouchere an anarchist, it would prove only one thing—that I was totally ignorant of who Mr. Labouchere is, and of what anarchism is.

The name of Nihilist arose in Russia under those merely passing and fortuitous circumstances which accompanied the initial movement of the *intelli-*

gquentia at the beginning of the reign of Alexander II.

Russia had just escaped from the yoke of the régime of Nicolas, and was preparing to throw off that of serfdom. Ideas, having burst their chains, began to work feverishly. All Russia cursed the past, and leaned out towards the future. A multitude of elements—but little enlightened, but little educated—elements that came straight from the streets, spontaneously gathered round the *intelliguentia*. All men began reasoning, criticizing, denying, inquiring.

The *fathers*—the older generation of Russia,—were frightfully corrupted by the reign of Nicolas; they felt themselves guilty towards Russia, towards their children, towards their conscience. How had they been able to bear the despotism of Nicolas? How had they been able to suffer,—and had they suffered alone,—and to participate in all the frightful abuses of serfdom? How had they allowed science to be persecuted for thirty-five years? Whither had all this led Russia? The *fathers* felt guilty; they would have liked to have made themselves scarce, to have sunk under the earth. The *children*—the younger generation—could cry out with perfect freedom, with all the force of a really honest indignation, of young enthusiasm, and of inexperience. Then certain sides of Russian general philosophy, certain characteristic traits of the *intelliguentia*, manifested themselves in the most ridiculous and most exaggerated fashion. The tendency towards democratic ideas manifested itself occasionally by the most exaggerated aversion from everything that was

aristocratic, from everything that smacked of the nobility, and consequently from all the formalities of superficial civilization. Uncleanly faces, dishevelled hair, dirty and fantastic clothes were to be seen. In conversation, to give proof of a wilful coarseness, the language of peasants was used. Contempt for the hypocritical and conventional formal morality, contempt for the ridiculous traditions which had so long been considered the expression of the wisdom of the State, indignation at the oppression borne by the individual—were expressed by an absolute negation of *authority* of all kinds, and in the most exaggerated tendency towards liberty.

All this certainly lent itself to caricature ; all this allowed prejudiced persons to formulate against the *intelliguentia* the accusation of wanting to destroy everything, of admitting the sacredness of nothing, of being without heart, without morality, and so forth. Naturally the enemies of the *intelliguentia* took advantage of this, and adopted with delight the nickname invented by Tourgéniev in his novel. Among the *intelliguentia* a few, from a spirit of contradiction, and by way of provoking the reactionists, began to adopt this name. Thus in Niekrassov, a son, answering his father's reproaches, says : "Nihilist ; 'tis a foolish word. But if by it you understand a frank man, who does not care to live on the possessions of others, who works, who seeks after the truth, tries that his life may not be useless, who bites his thumb at every rogue and occasionally knocks one down, then I don't see any harm ; call me Nihilist. Why not ?" ¹

¹ The works of Niekrassov. "The Library."

Nevertheless, only a small number among well-known persons, like Dmitri Pissarev, for example, accepted this nickname, and even then only, so to say, for the moment. Pissarev soon invented another title for himself and his co-religionists—the Realists, a name which however met with but little success. The absurdity of the word Nihilism was too palpable. Besides, the very facts which had called forth the nickname naturally disappeared very rapidly. The leaning towards outward manifestations gave way to positive work with redoubled energy, and soon all these childish things,—the women cutting their hair short, or exaggerated rudeness of manner,—became discredited. Thus the word Nihilism, which in earlier times had some meaning, at least as caricature, a few years later lost all definite significance. In Russia no serious writer, even though he were reactionary, would use it to designate the revolutionists. The word has passed for ever into the domain of pamphlets and of insults.

In Europe, on the contrary, the word Nihilism has the greatest vogue. The strangest thing is, this caricature is believed in as something real. Nihilism is considered a special doctrine, founded on personal negation of all positive ideals. This is repeated again and again, even in other works than those of Cheddo-Ferotti.¹ And this is not remarkable. But it is to be regretted that we do not find much more accuracy in a writer so conscientious and so erudite as M. Leroy-Beaulieu.

¹ "Nihilism and the Future of Russia," by Cheddo-Ferotti. This is a pseudonym under which a Russian who knows nothing about Russia hides himself.

What is nihilism? M. Leroy-Beaulieu asks himself. He answers that it is a *morbid fact*; he speaks of *gross materialism*, of *absurd negation*, of *immorality*. He is even ready to enter into an investigation of the question whether the climate of Russia has or has not influenced the development of nihilism. He is even ready to say, in concert with that poor old dotard of a prince, Mechtchersky, that nihilism is a sort of neurosis engendered by anaemia and the poor-bloodedness of the enlightened class, who have probably not the means to live well. A Russian, grateful to M. Leroy-Beaulieu for his fine work, excepting only a few mistakes, could only wish him from the bottom of his heart such health as was enjoyed by the apostles of nihilism quoted by him,—Hertzen, Bakounine, Lavrov, Tchernychevsky, Netchaïev, etc. M. Leroy-Beaulieu even sinks as low as giving the following definition of “the doctrine of nihilism.” “Take the heavens and the earth, take the State and the Church, the kings and the gods, and spit upon them. That is our symbol.”¹

We may certainly admit that if by nihilism we understand nonsense, nihilism and nonsense will have one and the same meaning. But it is equally true that with such methods of inquiry it is very difficult to succeed in understanding the real meaning of words and of facts. And if we begin to ask where in Russia is the “actual fact” that might correspond to the word nihilism, we shall find nothing but the general intellectual movement that I tried to describe in Books VI. and VII. This, as any one

¹ “Empire des Tzars,” vol. i. p. 76.

can soon see for himself, has very little resemblance to the definition given by M. Leroy-Beaulieu. Assuredly the intellectual movement in Russia, as elsewhere, may in certain individual cases give rise to some ridiculous results, silly, lending themselves to caricature, sometimes perhaps even criminal. It is precisely from these special facts that the notion of nihilism has been built up, uniting them without any reason into one single idea, although they had no connection in reality. Thus in nature there are creatures who have tails, others that have the scales of lizards, others again with paws and claws like tigers, some finally with wings. When you combine all these attributes in a dragon, you have before you a creature of your imagination, and not a real being. But although the dragon plays a very useful part in stories with which to frighten children, it has no place in natural history. In a serious study of Russia, neither can nihilism as a doctrine or a special tendency have a place. This is why the reader will not find the word *nihilism* in my work.

I use in this work, the Russian terminology, which is certainly the most correct in this matter, and includes the following names : the *enlightened folk*, or *intelliguentia*, the whole civilized class, that bears within itself the ideas of light, of liberty, of democracy ; the *revolutionists*—that portion of this social class that enters into an open struggle with the Government.

That which marks off the enlightened class is not a difference of opinion—there are only shades of difference—but rather the choice of methods of

action. Even quite recently, the Government itself has borne striking witness to the small *theoretical* difference between the revolutionists and the *intelliguentia*. "The liberty granted the press (?) has been used by it," says the Government, speaking of the Liberal organs, "to preach theories found to be in evident opposition to the fundamental basis of the State and of society. . . . It was so formerly, and to our deep regret it continues so now. The columns of journals and reviews of a certain shade of opinion are always marked by this tendency, which has engendered incalculable ill, and whose connection with the criminal doctrines set forth in the clandestine publications, cannot be doubted." The similarity, not merely of ideas, but of tone and manner of expression, in the clandestine press and in a great many articles appearing in authorized periodical publications, is so great that it has induced the Government to suppose that in both cases the same persons had written them.

The ideas of the revolutionists are then far from being so criminal, so subversive, so nihilist. We find in the revolutionists no special negation. The enlightened class cannot deny, as a matter of principle. But how could it do otherwise towards a *régime* that weighs so heavily upon the people, and upon individuality itself? Under such circumstances the tendency towards negation cannot fail to find expression; and to understand it there is no need for fantastic arguments as to the influence of the Russian climate on *nihilism*. This negation has, moreover, very definite limits. Tourgéniev, for example, has declared in the press that he agreed

in everything with Bazarov (his celebrated type of the nihilist), with the exception of his ideas upon æsthetics. Consequently, Tourgéniev must be considered a "nihilist" by those who use that word. But did Tourgéniev deny everything, wish to destroy everything? English readers know this writer well, and they know that to make such a statement would be simply ridiculous. It follows, then, that the violent words of Bazarov are not at all based upon an exclusively negative philosophy.

Let us turn, moreover, to the "apostles of nihilism" themselves. Could a man be found believing more ardently in Russia than Alexander Hertzen? Who has defended our popular institutions with greater ardour than did Tchernychevsky and Dobrolioubov? These are by no means antagonistic to their country; on the contrary they see in it many points on which one can and does rely. It was so also with Bakounine, the apostle of anarchism in Russia. A little later the largest section of the Russian revolutionary party, the *narodniks* (democrats) considered it their chief aim to formulate the "aspirations of the people," and to realize the "demands of the people." Still later the programme of the party of the *Will of the People*, whose aim is the overthrow of the Government by means of a conspiracy, takes as its starting point the affirmation that the popular institutions of Russia contain the healthiest germs of a social *régime*, and that, in virtue of this fact, it will suffice to "give the people the possibility of living, and organizing themselves in conformity with their natural inclinations." The party expresses a conviction that then the history

of Russia would really take a true direction "in conformity with the national spirit."

To whom among these could we apply the name of nihilist, of one willing to acknowledge nothing but an implacable negation, of nihilist spitting upon earth and heaven?

It is high time to end these empty, senseless phrases, and to renounce belief in the spirit of destruction as supposed to animate the intellectual and revolutionary movement of Russia. If, indeed, it has destroyed many superstitions, much brutality and grossness in certain strata of Russian society, it has given many healthy ideas, and has set forth in our society the bases of the development of equitable social conditions. All other nations, for example, may envy us the Russian family of our time. If the enlightened class finds itself forced to speak so much of destruction, of revolution, the fault lies, above all, with our absurd political *régime*, which impedes every creative work. The enlightened class has always devoted itself with the utmost eagerness to this creative work, as soon as it was at all possible. Tchernychevsky, for instance, joined ardently in the peasant reform, and wrote a series of sketches on the means of effecting the emancipation of the serfs. Certainly no one will consider these projects Utopian. Then Tchernychevsky set forth his conception of the political man: he is at once a Robert Owen and a Gladstone, who might in England be considered one of the greatest statesmen. Is it the fault of the *intelliguentia* if with us the activity of Gladstone is impossible?

Recently the Executive Committee, in its letter

to Alexander III. demanding from him a constituent assembly, declares that in this event "the party would in the future permit no violent act of opposition towards the Government sanctioned by a national assembly. . . . The Executive Committee," continues the letter, "will spontaneously put an end to its existence, and the forces organized about it will disperse in all directions, to devote themselves to the civilizing work necessary to the salvation of the fatherland. The pacific struggle of ideas will replace the violence that inspires us with greater aversion than your followers, and that we only employ because of the sad impossibility of acting otherwise." The same Executive Committee, on the occasion of the murder of President Garfield, published a declaration openly disapproving political murder in a country where every opinion can be freely expressed, and where the choice of governor depends on the nation. "It is," says the committee, "an act of despotism analogous to that against which we are fighting in Russia."

I confine myself to these few examples. They prove sufficiently, I think, how unfounded is the idea of the existence of Russian nihilism. If we wish to study the true Russia, we must strike out from our dictionaries this word, to which a mass of false notions cling, and hardly one real fact.

APPENDIX C.

SUBJECTS FORBIDDEN BY THE CENSORSHIP.

THE circulars of the Minister of the Interior that prohibit the discussion of such or such a question, are not handed over to the journals; they are only "communicated," and then taken away again. Consequently we cannot find in editorial offices a collection of these curious documents; and it is no easy task to seek out the innumerable questions and events which, at some time or other, were forbidden public discussion. I am anxious, therefore, to collect here some fragments of these statistics, published in a supplement of *The Will of the People*. The reader must bear in mind that these deal only with a certain period of time, the year 1881-1882, and only with some of the "interdictions."

4th March, 1881.

Certain organs of the press, on the plea of the extraordinary circumstances of the moment, permit themselves to insert articles absolutely unbecoming, on the necessity of reforming our political order, and in which doubts are also expressed as to the existence of true patriotism in the highest circles of Russian society, which are indifferent, it is said, to the interests of the people. The insertion of articles of this nature will infallibly lead to the suspension of the journal.

25th March.

Considering the approaching trial for the villainous crime of the 1st March,¹ the general director of the press, in conformity with an order of his excellency the Minister of the Interior, again calls attention to the prohibition, on pain of suspension, of inserting non-official information on political trials in journals.

16th April.

Considering the *coup d'Etat* accomplished in Bulgaria, considering also the necessity of giving support to Prince Alexander, it is considered desirable for our own press to speak of the actual events at Sophia with prudence.

1st May.

It is considered necessary that the rumours as to the illness of the Minister of the Interior, of the War Minister, and of the Financial Minister, as well as those concerning the programme of Loris Mélikov, should find no echo in the journals. The publishing any reports as to the change of *personnel* of the high dignitaries of the State is also forbidden.

9th May.

Another circular explaining that, by the circular of the 29th April, it is in no wise prohibited to speak of the Bulgarian *coup d'Etat* "with sympathy."

18th May.

To refrain from publishing any kind of information on to-day's sitting of the *douma* (municipal council), at which the question of proffering Count Loris Mélikov the title of honorary citizen of St. Petersburg was discussed ; reprinting the debates is also prohibited.

28th May.

To refrain from publishing any kind of information on the orders in council, or addresses of the *doumas* and the *zemstvos*, or from reprinting their minutes without the authorization of the authorities appointed by the law.

31st May.

The periodical press is beginning to publish untruthful or suggestive notes on the incidents that have occurred in secular or

¹ The murder of the Tzar.

Church schools. Morality will not permit us to transform schools into an arena for party struggles or journalistic polemics. The schools must not serve as an arena for the diversion of the public by means of amusing stories about the irritation of professors and scholars. To punish publications of this kind, par. 56 of the Supplement to par. 4 of the Code of Censorship may be applied.¹

31st May.

It is beyond dispute, and that more especially during the present difficult and unhappy circumstances, that the systematic publication of trenchant opinions, of information from private sources, and false rumours, whose principal aim is to excite discontent with the measures of the Government, cannot be permitted. Consequently his excellency the Minister of the Interior finds it necessary to make known that henceforth the exciting of passions by means of the press, or the diffusion of information likely to compromise public tranquillity, will no longer be allowed.

12th June.

The publication of rumours and sensational news on the relations of peasants and landlords, as well as articles like those which have been devoted to the trial of Lioutoritchi,² will entail the application of § 55 of the Supplement to § 4 of the Code of Censorship.

13th June.

The work of the commissions entrusted with the question of the diminution of the buying-in tax, to be spoken of only with the utmost prudence.

16th July.

The publication *beforehand* of the places or institutions which H. M. the Emperor and the members of the imperial family intend visiting, is prohibited.³

¹ The incidents referred to are the suicides of several scholars in consequence of the injustice of heads of schools; sometimes the schoolboys ill-using their professors in the same way from revenge; on two or three occasions preparing an explosion of powder-mines against them.

² The affair of the peasants in the village of Lioutoritchi, a revolting picture of the abuses of the noble proprietors and their stewards.

³ A reminder of the prohibition made in 1880.

17th August.

To refrain from any unfavourable allusion to the activity of the ex-prefect of St. Petersburg, General Baranov.

19th September.

It is considered indispensable to prohibit the publication of any measures of the Government on the subject of the inquiries into the economic relations of the Jews and the inhabitants of certain provinces.

4th October.

In some foreign journals there has appeared the news that Count Valoniev is to be prosecuted for the affair of the annexation of the lands of Orenburg. The general director of the press recommends that this information be not reproduced or quoted.¹

10th October.

His excellency the minister thinks it necessary to allow the press the freedom of speech indispensable to the thorough discussion of the question of migration, but it will be very regrettable if the unbecoming, improper conduct of certain organs of the press forces him to curtail this liberty. All reports and all communications touching the question of migration must be submitted to his excellency for revision.

13th November.

Nothing to be published as to the attempt on the life of General Tcherevine.²

3rd December.

In certain journals the grossest typographical errors in the title of his Majesty are allowed to pass, which gives rise to various rumours among the public as to the meaning of these errors. The general director recommends watching with special care the accuracy of the imperial name and title.³

¹ The annexation of the land at Orenburg is notorious; the functionaries of the place, in agreement with several dignitaries of the State, robbed the Bachkir population as well as the State.

² He was the chief of gendarmes.

³ Certain journals had published an appeal to subscribers for the monument of Alexander III. (instead of Alexander II.). An editor of the *Police Gazette*, who had been the first to make this mistake, was punished by a week's arrest in the guard room.

28th January, 1882.

Considering the approaching alterations in the statutes of the Real Schools, the publication of the discussions and the notices of the approaching inquiries is forbidden.

4th February.

No information as to the affairs of the family of the privy counsellor, Markousse, is to be published.¹

17th March.

The insertion of correspondences mentioning the rumours current among the peasants on the partition of the land, the black partition, etc., is absolutely prohibited, as also articles speaking of the necessity or the justice of changing the agrarian condition of the peasants.

21st March.

The insertion of unofficial information on the trial of the assassins of General Strielnikov is prohibited.

20th April.

Nothing on the Jewish question is to be published.

30th May.

To refrain from all reflections on the Zemsky Sobor.

26th June.

Several journals are discussing, in a subversive and violent form, the affair of Prince Chtcherbatov with his peasants. Considering that such articles have an injurious effect on the relations of peasants and proprietors, reference to this affair is prohibited.

19th August.

With regard to the accident on the Koursk railway, certain articles have appeared, accusing, without grounds, the employés of the Ministry of the Means of Communication. From to-day onwards the publications of such subversive articles may necessitate the infliction of the severest administrative punishments.

¹ Markousse had committed suicide, as he had not strength to bear the insolent treatment of one of the imperial princes, and had no means of satisfaction.

29th October.

The insertion of any sort of reflections on the subject of the student Fougalevitch and his expulsion from college is prohibited.¹

1st November.

Nothing to be inserted on the disturbances at the University of Kazan.

25th November.

Nothing to be inserted on the misunderstanding between Vleigard and Kvatz.

25th November.

Nothing to be inserted concerning the secret society whose aim is to act against the Terrorists.

16th December.

The report on the tribunal at Kazan is not to be published, nor is any information to be inserted with regard to the affair of the ex-student Semionov, condemned to imprisonment for having offended the rector of the University.

As this work is passing through the press, I am receiving fresh documents to add to those which I have just quoted. These are from the *résumé* of a circular of the Department of General Business (the Minister of the Interior), dated 18th September, 1885, No. 3,188. This circular absolutely prohibits every discussion and the publication of any information on the subject of the approaching anniversary (September 25th) of the emancipation of the serfs.

¹ I have been unable to obtain any information about this affair, or about that which led to the circular of November 25th.

APPENDIX D.

PARTITION OF THE LAND.

SINCE the Act of Emancipation (1861) partition of the land had not for a long time been practised, especially in fertile regions. In the North, and in the central governments, where the value of the land is not great, and sometimes even hardly covers the taxes, the land, as a rule, was more equally distributed. In the South, and generally in the fertile regions, where land is very valuable, equal partition is, for the most part, rarely practised. The land remained divided among the households (families) as in 1861, in spite of the numerical changes naturally noticeable in each family. Thus the distribution of land became very unequal. Here is an example, the first that occurs to me :—

The commune Soukmanka (government of Zambov) has 5,338 inhabitants, and 13,376 déciatines of land. So that each inhabitant ought to have 2·5 déciatines. But in reality we find a number of peasants (945 men) in the commune who have only 1·2 déciatines per head; while, on the contrary, a happy minority (13 men) have on an average 3·6 déciatines per head. The rest of

the lots on the property balance between these two extreme poles of inequality.

Why, then, do the peasants not make equal division of the land? Very often this question has been answered by the supposition that the spirit of equality and of collectivism is dying out amongst the peasantry. But this supposition is not correct. Of course those peasants who have succeeded in accumulating in their own hands a great deal of land, did all in their power to postpone a new division. But these efforts of a privileged minority were only successful because the peasants were waiting for the census (*revisia*). They are accustomed to divide the land at the time of the official census; and, moreover, at that moment they were expecting that the census would be accompanied by a "*black division*,"—a general, national division of the land. But time passed, the patience of the peasants was exhausted, and then here and there the division was commenced.

This movement, like all popular movements, grew very rapidly, and to an extent almost unexpected even by very conscientious observers of the life of the people. It is not uninteresting to compare, for example, the opinions of the statisticians of the government of Zambov in the few years 1880–1882. In the year 1880 they think that among the peasant ex-serfs the commune is being slowly transformed into private property. A year later they already say: "If the statistical inquiry into the district of Kozlev had been made a little earlier, before 1879, for example,¹ we should only

¹ This opinion is based upon the inquiry into the district made by Borisoghlisk, and concluded before the year 1880.

know that the peasants make no divisions of the land except at the time of the census. . . . Twenty years had passed since the last census, without the peasants beginning a new partition. But now there arose rumours among the peasants of the necessity of dividing the land 'for the new souls,' without waiting for the census. These rumours finally ended in 1880 and 1881 by several communes in the district of Kozlev making new and equal partitions." The movement manifests itself chiefly among the Crown peasants, but statisticians are already changing their opinion with regard to peasants formerly serfs. "Among the peasants who are ex-serfs," they say, "discussions are beginning on the subject of equal partition. *We cannot but believe that with them also these discussions will sooner or later lead to resolutions of the Communal Assemblies on the division of the land, just as was the case with the Crown peasants.*"

The next year, 1882, many partitions of land among the ex-serfs of the district of Morschansk¹ took place, and the statisticians are astonished to see that "the communes referred to carried out the equal partition of land, although they had quite paid off the supplementary sum for its redemption to the former lords." And this fact certainly deserves attention, for it is supposed that the redemption of the land once accomplished, the peasants would no longer be willing to re-divide it.

To give statistics of this movement is impossible, for after all we have only a very small amount of positive information. I therefore confine myself to

¹ All these districts are in the same government of Zambov.

a few examples, which I take from those fertile regions so long quoted as proof of the dying out of collective property.

The general outlines of the movement are everywhere the same. Everywhere the re-partition is preceded by a formidable agitation. The peasants begin the discussion in private conversations. The enemies of the re-partition try to prevent it by every kind of means. They declare that the partition without the official census is illegal. They invent fairy tales; for example, that after the re-partition each one of the "new souls" will have to pay a tax per head which at present is only paid by those inscribed in the census. Sometimes they spread the rumour that a *black partition* is about to take place, and that the peasants will get the supplementary lots of the Crown and manorial lands. One other method employed by the enemies of re-partition should be noted, as something quite new: they threaten—should the partition be decided upon—to immediately buy back their lots as private property (this being permitted by law). For a while all these tricks succeed. But the movement grows, gathers strength. The partisans of re-partition at last decide to put the question to the vote in the Assembly. At the first trial, however, they often do not get the two-thirds of the votes required by law. Still the agitation goes on. The proposition, although rejected, is brought forward in the assemblies again and again, till the partisans of re-partition get the upper hand—and the division takes place.

It is among the Crown peasants that the move-

ment begins in each locality, and moreover in the *large* communes. The small communes usually wait for the large ones to take the initiative; but the partition once accomplished, in no matter what commune, the example tempts all the neighbouring ones, and little by little the dividing up of land spreads right round the whole district. The ex-serf peasants let themselves be drawn into the movement later on, and sometimes even the *tchetvertniks* and other private proprietors, themselves join it.

In the above-mentioned districts of the government of Zambov, the first example of re-partition was set by the Crown peasants of the district of Morschansk. The first divisions were carried out there in the year 1875 (two communes of 1,800 inhabitants). The example was followed. In 1876-77 there were already several communes, with populations of 24,200 souls, who made re-partitions. In 1877-78 again, 11,120 souls; in 1878-79, 15,200; in 1880-81, 34,313 souls. Beyond this I have no information as to this locality. The total number of persons who had carried out the re-partition was, in the years 1880-81, a third of the population of the district. An immense majority of these belonged to the Crown peasants. The ex-serfs did not begin the movement until 1880, and in 1881 there were already 4,000 who had made a re-partition. As it spread among the ex-serfs, the movement was also carried into the neighbouring district (Kozlov), where the conditions were evidently favourable, for from 1880-81 a population of 37,068 souls had made a re-partition. This, too, was among the Crown peasants. As to the

ex-serfs, an agitation was started, and even in 1880 one commune had decided to divide its lands. In the district of Borisogeschsk the movement is growing more slowly; begun in 1880, so far only 12,516 souls have been drawn into it.¹

Unfortunately I have only reliable information as to the commencement of the movement. This holds also in regard to that in the government of Riazan. In the latter it began at the same time, but promised to assume colossal proportions. Of the 313 communes in the district of Ronnenbourg, concerning which we have reliable information, there are only 90 in which the question of re-partition is not being discussed. In the other 223 communes, it is occasionally discussed favourably (in 63 communes), but more frequently (in 160 communes) the debates are very heated. In the 63 communes the partisans of partition believe themselves strong enough to raise the question even in the assemblies of the mir, and very often (in 23 cases) only two or three votes were needed to secure the majority of two-thirds demanded by law. In 29 cases an absolute majority voted in favour of re-partition. Finally, in 12 communes all opposition was overcome, and the re-partitions were carried out during the years 1880 and 1881.

Such was the situation in the year 1882, as set forth by the Statistical Committee. It is almost identical in the district of Dankov. Here the movement was started a little earlier. There had been re-partitions even before 1876-77; since the year 1879 the movement has become very pronounced, concerning which we have some very precise details.

¹ The total number of communes in the district is 340.

But here the agitation is carried on with much greater difficulty. The reason for this lies in the distribution of the peasants, as may be seen from the following table :

	Ronnenbourg.	Dankov.
1. Crown peasants holding the land in common	42,297	19,817
2. Crown peasants, with semi-communal land	8,248	2,789
3. Tchetvertniks	2,740	12,131
4. Ex-serfs	40,614	63,787

Thus in Ronnenbourg the element of Crown peasants holding land in common predominates ; while, on the contrary, in Dankov, the ex-serfs and tchetvertniks are in a majority. This accounts for the difference.

However this may be, the movement spread in 1882 in 135 communes,¹ and 25 of these even carried out re-partitions during 1879-1882.

The population of these 25 communes (16,407) is about one-sixth of the entire population of the district. From this the reader can gather that these are large communes which are at the head of the movement. In fact, every commune in the district has, on an average, a population of 314 souls. The population of the communes that have carried out re-partitions is twice as large (631). The same holds with regard to Ronnenbourg, the average for all communes being 400 ; the average of the communes which have re-divided their lands, 652·7.

Let us now pass to the government of Veronéj, contiguous to the south and to that of Zambov,

¹ Of the 254 communes carefully examined, there still remain 59 communes in the district whose position is not clear.

The following is a table showing the number of communes, and of their inhabitants, who have divided their land :

Year.	Communes.	Population.
1878	2	489
1881	21	32,080
1882	13	15,500
1883	13	17,999
1884	8	13,798
1885 ¹	3	9,174
	—	—
	60	89,040
	—	—

The population of the district being 162,259, the number of partisans of re-partition is over one half. As in all other cases, it is the large communes that divide their lands. The average population per commune in this district is 500, of those that divided their lands, 1,520.

In the beginning of my work, the reader will find some details on analogous movements at Koursk and Ekaterinoslav. Prougatine has just published some very interesting facts on the government of Simbirsk. These refer to the year 1884.

Among the peasants of the government of Simbirsk, says Prougatine, a very important movement is going on in favour of re-dividing the land according to the "new souls" (*sic*). The movement is most pronounced in the districts of Alatyr, Ardatov, and Bouinsk; its centre is in Bouinsk. In 48 communes of this district decisions as to the re-partition have been come to, and in 38 of these communes they have already been put into execution. The rest

¹ The data here very incomplete.

are waiting to have their decisions ratified by the committee on peasant affairs. The agrarian discussions between the partisans and enemies of re-partition daily grow more violent and more hostile. The most powerful arm in the hands of the anti-re-partitionists is Article 54 of the General Statutes.¹ The expression "head of the family" being extremely vague, and the difficulty of getting together all the "heads of families" being insurmountable, there are always plenty of pretexts for declaring any decision illegal according to Article 54. Thus it happens that a decision for re-partition which is already being put into execution is suddenly annulled, because some votes required to make up the legal two-thirds are wanting. The committees on peasant affairs go over the counting of the votes several times, and very often the same decree is ratified in one case and annulled in another. Then the Communal Assembly again decrees the partition of the land, the counting of the votes is begun over again, and again the decrees are ratified or annulled. In the meantime the struggle within the commune grows more and more bitter, causing dissensions, menaces, and very often violence and murder.

But the re-partition of land is even more impeded by par. 164 of the statutes on the re-purchase of land. When, after long discussions and quarrels, the commune at last decides on dividing the land, the anti-re-partitionists oppose the collective decision, and begin re-purchasing their lots as private property. Moreover, this is not bad business for them, as to buy

¹ This declares that two-thirds of the votes of "heads of families" must be given for dividing land

back land they have to pay 18 roubles per déciatine, while the actual price of land in the government of Simbirsk fluctuates between 40 and 150 roubles. Several heads of families thus appropriate the lots of others by advancing the money for their re-purchase. Generally speaking, section 164 is largely put into practice here. Since the years 1877-81 there have thus been re-purchased (as private property) 11,000 déciatines. The struggles of the mir against some of the peasants are evidence of its apogee in the communes where this occurs. The hostility of the peasants is full of a hate that recalls that of the South Russian to the Jews.

APPENDIX E.

RUSSIAN WORKS AND PUBLICATIONS QUOTED.

<i>Novoié Vremia</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>The New Time.</i>
<i>Viestnik Narodnoi Voli</i> (<i>review</i>)	<i>The Messenger of the Will of the People.</i>
<i>Sievernyi Viestnik</i> (<i>review</i>)	<i>The Messenger of the North.</i>
<i>Volnoié Slovo</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>Free Speech.</i>
<i>Rousskya Viedomosti</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>The Russian Gazette.</i>
<i>Penzenskya Eparkialnya Viedomosti</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>The Diocesan Gazette of Penza.</i>
<i>Golos</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>The Voice.</i>
<i>Narodnaia Volia</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>The Will of the People.</i>
<i>Zemlia i Volia</i>	<i>Land and Liberty.</i>
<i>Grajdanine</i>	<i>The Citizen.</i>
<i>Zemskyi Obzor</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>The Review of the Zemstvos.</i>
<i>Iouriditcheskyi Viestnik</i> (<i>review</i>)	<i>The Judicial Messenger.</i>
<i>Poliarnaia Zvezda</i> (<i>collection</i>)	<i>The Polar Star.</i>
<i>Moskovskya Viedomosti</i> (<i>newspaper</i>)	<i>The Moscow Gazette.</i>
<i>Rousskaia Mysl</i> (<i>review</i>)	<i>Russian Thought.</i>
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